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# ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF ŚAIVISM IN SOUTH INDIA

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# ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF ŚAIVISM IN SOUTH INDIA

BY

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UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

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## FOREWORD

The "Origin and Early History of Śaivism in South India" is the result of researches carried on by Mr. C. V. Narayana Aiyar as a Fellow of this department during the years 1928-29 under the guidance of Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar.

Beginning with an account of the Vedic origins of Śaivism, the work traces the spread of that creed in South India, and its early history to the first half of the eighth century A.D. The development of Śaivism as attested by Sanskrit sources is studied in some detail in the first six chapters which furnish the background of the author's approach to South Indian Śaivism.

The possibility that Śaivism may contain prehistoric and non-Aryan elements in its make up, though it has been ever present before the student of Indian religions, had not, when Mr. Narayana Aiyar wrote his book, attained the concreteness that it has attained since the publication of Marshall's great work on Mohenjo Daro, and the reader will find little discussion of this aspect of the subject in the book.

It may, however, be noted that recent research into the symbolism of the *liṅga* from this standpoint tends to support Mr. Narayana Aiyar's conclusion which denies the exclusively phallic origin and nature of the liṅga. Thus Professor P. Mus has said: "Que le liṅga soit un phallus, il n'y a pas à en douter. Mais

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il n'est pas que cela; il n'est pas qu'un phallus, anatomiquement, si j'ose dire; il n'est même pas peut-etre surtout cela".

The author's central aim has been to give, as far as possible, a continuous account of the development of Śaivism in the Tamil country. His sources are mainly literary, and only in part contemporary; he has had to depend mostly on hagiology; again, the *Tirumandiram,* one of his main sources, is a very obscure work which has never been properly edited. In view of the unusually difficult conditions in which the work was accomplished, it is not likely that all his interpretations and reconstructions will find universal acceptance. But as a first approximation to a history of early Tamil Śaivism, the book will be welcomed by all earnest students of the history of Tamil culture.

LIMBDI GARDENS,
ROYAPETTAH,
MADRAS.

K. A. N.

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# PREFACE

This book embodies the results of the work that I did as Research Fellow of the Madras University between January 1928 and June 1929. Since no book had yet been published dealing with the history of Śaivism in South India, I had no chance of benefiting by the researches of previous scholars. There had appeared a few articles from some enthusiasts, which were interesting in themselves, but were of doubtful historical value. European savants who had explored Vedic literature were responsible for the spread of some wrong notions connecting Śiva worship with the phallic cult, and even eminent men like the late T. A. Gopinatha Rao propagated the error. Men who were steeped in Tamil religious literature displayed an utter lack of interest in its history, and even went to the extent of condemning historical investigation into the lives and character of the saints as being both impious and futile. One good gentleman asked me, when I went to consult him on a small matter, "Are you not satisfied with knowing that there is the sun to rid the world of its darkness ? Should you be curious to know when the sun came into being and who created the sun ?" That is the common attitude noticeable amongst us.

Under such circumstances, the only method I could adopt was to utilise the internal evidence that could be carefully gathered from the literature itself. Laborious indeed was the task. There was always a

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feeling that the gain was inadequate. Yet, the thing has been done, and the result has now been placed before the public for what it is worth. An attempt has been made to fix the dates of the Samayācāryas. The conclusions have, in some cases, differed from those that had been previously reached by some scholars.

I have great pleasure in recording my deep sense of gratitude to Rao Bahadur Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar who placed his large library entirely at my disposal and who evinced real affection for me throughout the period I worked under his guidance. It was a pleasure even to disagree with him in an investigation, for the wealth of learning he evidenced on such occasions was very great. I must also express my indebtedness to Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri for the care with which he studied my manuscript and arranged it in the form in which it now appears.

PRESIDENCY COLLEGE, C. V. NARAYANA IYER.
MADRAS,
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## CHAPTER I.

### THE RUDRA OF THE VEDAS.

Dr. Muir has remarked that Rudra must be regarded in the Vedic period as "a malevolent deity whose destructive shafts, the source of disease and death to man and beast, the worshipper strives by his entreaties to avert...... The remedies of which Rudra is the dispenser may be considered as signifying little more than cessation of his destroying agency and the consequent restoration to health and vigour of those victims of his ill-will who had been in danger of perishing".[1] Weber is of the same opinion. "It was thus in the natural course of things" says he, "that they should connect everything horrible and terrible with the idea of the god of storms and regard him as the lord and the cause of every evil."[2] A proper reading of the Vedic hymns addressed to Rudra will not lead to such an inference. These scholars failed to discover the real characteristic of the deities because they were obsessed with the notion that these deities were only personifications of atmospherical phenomena. Examining the hymns addressed to Rudra, one can see that the functions attributed to him were two-fold—that of bestowing prosperity and that of destroying suffering. He is conceived of as a positively benevolent deity when he confers wealth and welfare and as a wrathful god when he chastises evil-doers. Several passages in the Ṛg Vedic hymns express fear. For example, "Slay

[1] Muir—OST. IV 401.

[2] Quoted by Muir—OST. IV 396.

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not our men in thine anger";[3] "far from us be thy cow-slaying and man-slaying weapon";[4] "may the hero spare our horses";[5] "let us not, Rudra, provoke thee by our prostration, by our unsuitable praises, vigorous deity, or by our common invocations";[6] "may the bolt of Rudra avoid us; may the great malevolence of the impetuous deity depart from us";[7] "so taking heed of us as neither to be incensed against us nor to injure us".[8] He is given the epithet "man-slaying" in IV, 3. 6. These appeals are likely, at first sight, to make one believe that Rudra was a god of evil, a deity of destruction. But really there is another aspect of the same god. There are several passages in these hymns themselves where his benevolent nature is praised. He is sought for as a refuge from the anger of the gods. "We invoke to our succour the impetuous Rudra, the fulfiller of sacrifice, the swift, the wise. May he drive far away from us the anger of the gods".[9] He is constantly appealed to for prosperity. "We present these prayers to Rudra......that there may be prosperity to our two-footed and four-footed creatures, that everything in this village may be well fed and free from disease".[10] He was also assigned the function of ruling over heroes. "Let us worship thee, the ruler over heroes".[11] Evidently, the idea seems to be that, since the welfare of the country depended upon the work done by its heroes, their work should become beneficial through the help they received from Rudra.

[3] RV. I. 114. 8.
[4] RV. I. 114. 10.
[5] RV. II. 33. 1.
[6] RV. II. 33. 4.
[7] RV. II. 33. 14.
[8] RV. II. 33. 15.
[9] RV. I. 114. 4.
[10] RV. I. 114. 1.
[11] RV. I. 114. 2.

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He is also thought of as the guiding spirit and so is requested to confer all those favours upon his worshippers, which the great Manu obtained through worship.[12] He is regarded as a great physician who took with him medicines for effecting cures. "I hear that thou art the great physician of physicians".[13] "Carrying in his hand most choice remedies, may he give us protection, defence, shelter".[14] He is also appealed to for long life and for offspring. "Through the auspicious remedies conferred by thee, Rudra, may I attain a hundred winters. Drive away from us enmity and distress and diseases to a distance".[15] "May we, Rudra, increase in offspring".[16] Instead of being conceived of as a malevolent deity, whose evil has to be dreaded, he is thought of as the god who averts calamity. "Thou, Rudra, art in glory the most eminent of beings, the strongest of the strong, wielder of the thunderbolt. Carry us happily across our calamity. Repel all the assaults of evil".[17] He is at the same time praised as a very powerful deity who could be fierce when he wanted to destroy evil-doers. "Celebrate the renowned and youthful god, mounted on his chariot, terrible as a wild beast, destructive and fierce. Be gracious to (us) thy worshippers, who praise thee. May thy hosts prostrate someone else than us (that is, our enemies)".[18]

From these and other similar passages, the popular conception of the Ṛg Vedic Rudra is very

[12] RV. I. 114. 2.
[13] RV. II. 33. 4.
[14] RV. I. 114. 5.
[15] RV. II. 33. 2.
[16] RV. II. 33. 1.
[17] RV. II. 33. 3.
[18] RV. II. 33. 11.

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clearly seen. He is petitioned to for redress of suffering and also for various comforts. There is nothing to indicate that the god was one who was always disposed to do evil, which could be averted only by praises and oblations. On the contrary, he was also the saviour God of the Vedic period. This interpretation of the god's nature will become quite intelligible if Sāyaṇa's explanation of the etymology of Rudra is noticed. In commenting on the word 'Rudra' occurring in RV. II. 1. 6, he gives two explanations, one of which is to the point. "Rud duḥkham duḥkha-hetur vā pāpādiḥ tasya drāvayitā etan nāmako devo'si" 'Muir translates the passage thus:—" 'Rut' means suffering or sin etc., which causes suffering. Thou art the god so-called, who drives this away".[19] The poets of the Ṛg Veda, as seen above, make appeals for the removal of suffering. It was quite likely that they had a conception of sin, the cause of suffering. 'Ava syatam muñcyatam yad no asti tanūṣu baddham kṛtam eno asmat', which means 'remove and banish from us whatever sin we have done, which attaches to our bodies'.[20] If this view be correct, it becomes possible to explain how Rudra of the Ṛg Veda became Śiva of the later period; for the etymological explanation of the word 'Śiva' bears a correspondence to that of Rudra. According to the *Siddhānta Kaumudī*,[21] the root 'So' means 'to make thin' or 'to attenuate'. In the *Śabda Kalpa Druma*, one of the meanings given to the word 'Śiva' is 'he who attenuates sin (Aśubha)', and this meaning is derived from the root 'So' as explained above. Both

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[19] RV. II. 1. 6. Muir IV, p. 307; also p. 303 n.

[20] RV. VI. 74. 3.

[21] Bālamanōrama edn. p. 235 root No. 1145.

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Rudra and Śiva therefore mean 'he who removes sin or suffering'.

When once this idea of the removal of sin prevailed in the country, it was natural that people should begin to reflect about the nature of sin itself. It is conceivable that the earliest idea of sin would be the commission of any act which went against the accepted conventions about modes of worship just in the same manner in which the commission of any act which went against the established laws of the state would be regarded as a crime. Still later, even an omission to do what one was expected to do as a normal person, would come to be regarded as sin. Thus if one failed to worship God, one would be considered guilty of sin. It is this notion that seems to be reflected in the verse "May thy hosts prostrate some one else than us".[22] If such ideas prevailed for some time, everyone would begin to feel that he was a sinner, for there would be no one who would not be troubled by the thought that he might have on some occasion or other either committed a wrong or omitted to do the right thing. The occasions for such transgressions also would be more frequent as society became more complex. This was the case in the Yajur Vedic period. From the Śatarudrīya hymn, we can, get a glimpse of the country in the period of the Yajur Veda. Verse 17 addresses Rudra as the wearer of the "sacrificial cord" (Upavītine) which shows that the formalities of the sacrificial rituals had assumed importance. Sacrifices are usually performed by mortals for gaining their desires. The *mantras* uttered during sacrifices are addressed to deities who grant the desires of the sacrificer. The cord is to be

[22] RV. II. 33. 11.

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woven by the sacrificer, but when Rudra himself was the god, whose favour was sought, what necessity could there be for the god to wear the cord? He was not a sacrificer, but only a deity to whom the sacrifice had to be offered. How then is the epithet *Upavītine* to be explained? The only answer that seems possible is that since, in the eyes of the worshipper, the man most worthy of respect was the person who performed the largest number of sacrifices, he gave the form of the sacrificer to Rudra also. Whatever might be the propriety in doing this, it is valuable in throwing light upon the fact that the sacrifices were the order of the day. At such a time monarchs must have vied with one another in the performance of sacrifices pertaining to their order, and this would lead to world-wide conquests and also to constant warfare among neighbouring monarchs. This is reflected in the verses of the hymn where the king's attributes are applied to Rudra. Rudra is called "the leader of the armies";[23] "the lord of regions"[24] "the innoxious charioteer";[25] "the loud-shouting lord of foot-soldiers who causes his foes to shriek";[26] "the conqueror, the piercer, the lord of armies, which wound, the towering wielder of a sword".[27] Again the great increase in crime is evidenced by such expressions in the same poem as 'to the murderous', to the 'lord of stealers', to 'those who carry swords', to 'those who prowl by night', to the 'lord of plunderers',[28] etc. Necessarily, the god who is the lord of these must be a punishing god if he is to

[23] *Śatarudriya*, v. 17.
[24] Ibid. v. 17.
[25] Ibid. v. 18.
[26] Ibid. v. 19.
[27] Ibid. v. 20.
[28] Ibid. v. 21.

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be sought after as a refuge by the peaceful worshipper. The allusion to the 'assemblies',[29] 'troops', 'companies',[30] 'leaders of armies',[31] proves the great development in the administration. The mention of 'pathways', 'roads', 'skirts of mountains', 'water-courses', etc.,[32] and of 'fords' and 'river-banks'[33] reveal the extent of territory conquered and the means of communication established. Such phrases as 'helmeted', 'cotton-quilted cuirass', 'iron mail', 'armour', 'drums', etc. evidence the high stage of development reached in the art of warfare. It was in such an age that Rudra came to be conceived of as a fierce god, who inflicted punishment on all evil-doers—and the evil-doers must have been numerous. That was only natural. Population had increased, the kings had become very powerful. The struggle for existence was much keener, and competition among the people much more severe than in the Ṛg Vedic period. This meant that there was much scope for the commission of sins and crimes. Correspondingly, punishments also became more frequent and numerous. Kings became more dreaded than before. Similarly, the punishing god Rudra came to be much more feared than before. Hence it was that the comparatively beneficent, mild, and lovable Rudra of the Ṛg Vedic period became a powerful deity, dealing out punishments unfalteringly. He was now believed to have hosts of subordinates, the Rudras as they were called, who had dreadful weapons which they used effectively, e.g. "(we unbend a thousand leagues away to) the bows of

[29] Ibid. v. 24.
[30] Ibid. v. 25.
[31] Ibid. v. 26.
[32] Ibid. v. 37.
[33] Ibid. v. 42.

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those unnumbered thousands of Rudras who are upon the earth";[34] "(we deprecate)...the wrath...of those Rudras who in thousands surround him on all sides".[35] In this poem there is no mention of the Maruts who are spoken of in several Ṛg Vedic hymns as being the sons of Rudra (RV. I. 85. 1, RV. I. 114. 1, RV. II, 1. 6, RV. II. 33. 6, RV. II. 34. 2, RV. II. 41. 2. etc.). The mention of the Rudras and the omission of the Maruts seem to be indicative of the worshippers' changed conception of Rudra since the Maruts were humane deities whereas the Rudras were mainly useful for awarding punishments. Yet the real nature of Rudra as the promoter of prosperity and the remover of sin is not entirely lost sight of. It is only obscured; for example, verse 4 is a supplication that men and cattle may be healthy and cheerful. The god is called "most bountiful" in verses 11, 29, etc. Verse 40 speaks of him as the "bringer of prosperity", and verse 41 as "the source of prosperity". Again the concluding three verses present a pleasing and beneficent picture of even the attendant Rudras. "Reverence to the Rudras who live in the sky, of whom rain is the arrows........ Reverence to the Rudras who live in the atmosphere, of whom wind is the arrows.....Reverence to the Rudras who live upon the earth of whom food is the arrows".[36] It is plain that the intention of the poet was to indicate in these verses that wind, rain and food, the things most needed for man's existence on earth were given to him by Rudra himself and that the Rudras were the agents employed by him for that purpose.

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[34] *Śatarudriya*, v. 54.

[35] Ibid v. 6.

[36] Ibid. verses. 64, 65, & 66,

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In the Atharva Veda, worshippers make in their hymns a sort of complaint that they were being molested, and that Rudra should help them against their oppressors; e.g. "O, Rudra, destroy the food of him who seeks to take ours"[37]. Wicked people resorted to various forms of sorcery and the victims of such practices had to make a definite appeal to Bhava and Śarva (two names for Rudra); e.g., "Fierce gods, launch your thunderbolt against Yātudhāna, who practises sorcery, and prepares root (for that purpose)".[38] The belief in goblins also has taken deep root in the popular imagination; for the poet prays 'smite with the thunderbolt him who is a goblin'.[39] It is not necessary to suppose that the Aryan religion was in any manner influenced by non-Aryan superstitions; for there was nothing to prevent the Aryans themselves from having superstitions. The distress of the people in several ways was probably very real. Else they need not have made specific mention of it as in the succeeding verse: "Distressed, I again and again invoke you; deliver us from calamity". When the Atharva Veda was composed, people had begun to spread themselves over a very large portion of Upper India, and many must have come into contact with strangers living in the interior of the country. They would surely have resented the encroachment upon their domains and it was the trouble caused by them that the men of the Atharva Veda sought to avert by appealing to the gods. It was they who were being spoken of as 'sorcerers and evil-doers'; e.g., "Let Bhava and Śarva launch the lightning,

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[37] AV. II. 27. 6.
[38] AV. IV. 28. 6.
[39] Ibid. IV. 28. 7.



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the bolt of the gods, against the doer of wickedness, against him who employs sorcery, against the evil-doer ".[40] The mode of warfare prevalent in the period of the Atharva Veda was much more deadly than in the previous age. Poisons were in use. Kings and conquerors must have employed them for destructive purposes. Quite naturally, therefore, Śarva and Bhava were also believed to resort to them for punishing wrong-doers; e.g., they are requested to carry their 'deadly poisons to others than us'.[41] It is noteworthy also that Bhava is addressed as 'King Bhava'. This implies that people had begun to attach greater importance to the protecting work of the king than to the sacrificial rites performed by the Brahmans. It has been seen above that Rudra was addressed as the wearer of the sacrificial cord in the Yajur Veda; he was also called 'the dweller in the mountains'.[42] In the Atharva Veda hymns he is assigned a place in the sky; e.g., "We offer reverence to thee......from thy domain in the sky; reverence to thy firmament".[43] But as if to enable him to see everything everywhere he is spoken of as being 'thousand-eyed'.[44] This attribute, however, appears as applied to Śiva even in the Śatarudrīya hymn.[45] But it is more appropriate to the dweller in the sky. It is the Rudras the attendants of Rudra, that are spoken of as living in the sky in the Yajur Veda.[46] But these same Rudras are also spoken of (in other places in the

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[40] Ibid. X. 1. 23.
[41] Ibid. VI. 93. 1.
[42] *Śatarudrīya*, verses 2, 3, & 4.
[43] AV. XI. 2. 4.
[44] AV. XI. 2. 3.
[45] Verses. 8, 13, 29 etc.
[46] *Śatarudrīya*, v. 56 & v. 64.

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poem) as living in the atmosphere and also upon the earth.[47]

But in the Atharva Veda we notice that a new class of beings have become Rudra's special attendants and are employed by him to cause destruction to evil-doers.[48] They are the Keśins or the long-haired munis. The munis are found mentioned even in the Ṛg Veda, but not as the attendants of Rudra. They were beings capable of being inspired by any one of the gods and were 'fitted to gain the beneficent aid of every god'. In this connection the Ṛg Veda hymn X. 136. 1 to 7 is worthy of notice. Translated by Dr. Muir, it runs thus:—"The long-haired (being) sustains fire, water and the two worlds, he is to view the entire sky; he is called this light. The wind-clad (i.e. naked) munis wear brown and soiled (garments); they follow the course of the wind, when ye, O gods, have entered (into them). Transported by our impulses as munis, we have pursued the winds. You, O mortals, behold our bodies. The muni, a friend fitted to gain the beneficent aid of every god flies through the air, perceiving all forms. The muni, impelled by the gods,. . . . .the steed of the wind, the friend of Vāyu agitated for him; the long-haired (being) breaks down the things which are unbending, by means of the vessel of water (Viṣa) which he drank along with Rudra".[49] From this hymn, it is clear that people believed that it was possible for a mortal to rise to the position of gods by his austerity, and that when he became equal to the gods, he would become their friend and possess their godly

[47] v. 65. & v. 66.
[48] AV. XI. 2, 18.
[49] Muir, IV. 318.

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powers. The word keśin applied to the muni shows that those who practised austerity allowed their hair to grow. But in this hymn we do not find any mention of munis being the special attendants of any particular god. Their association with all the gods is indicated, and, possibly as a result of this, they seem to have been granted the honour of drinking water (viṣa) with Rudra. (It is impossible to discover what this 'drinking water with Rudra' means). On the other hand, in the Atharva Veda, the munis appear as the attendants of Rudra and are worshipped along with him. e.g. "Reverence to thy shouting, long-haired, reverenced, devouring hosts".[50] "(We worship) the god who has brown horses, is dark, black, destroying, terrible, who casts down the car of keśin (the long-haired being)".[51]

The question now arises as to who these Keśins were and what position they occupied in the Ṛg Veda and in the Atharva Veda periods respectively. Surely the Keśins were not deities; otherwise the poet would not have stated, "transported by our impulses as *munis*, we have pursued the winds". They were only ordinary mortals who by their piety and austerity had acquired the powers of gods. Hence, it is clear that even in the days of the Ṛg Veda the belief prevailed that a particular mode of living would result in the development of superhuman powers. The possession of such powers would be naturally coveted at least by the specially ambitious. They would, therefore, live a life different from that of ordinary men whose religion would consist mainly of sacrifices to the Vedic gods. In other words, the Karma path (to use the language of a later

[50]AV. XI. 2. 31.
[51]AV. XI. 2. 18.

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period) would have been pursued by the majority while the path of austerity would be chosen by a few. It ought to have been the path of *bhakti,* as conceived of in the earliest times; for the word muni comes from the root 'man', which means 'to think or reflect upon' or 'to set the heart or mind on'.[52] In fact, it is impossible to conceive of a period when some form of *bhakti* did not prevail. The very fact that sacrifices were offered to the gods is indicative of a love of the gods. But generally speaking, the sacrificers and those who uttered the Vedic mantras were seekers of worldly good. The munis were different. They were, evidently, men who desired to get beyond earthly existence and to move at will like the gods enjoying unmitigated happiness for all time. They would not have uttered any mantras, for almost all mantras were prayers either for the avoidance of suffering, or the enjoyment of comforts. The sacrifices also would yield the same result. The word 'maunam' or silence is derived from the word 'muni' and may therefore be taken to be indicative of the method employed by munis to realise their desire of acquiring godly powers. They observed *maunam* or silence as contrasted with the people who went on voicing forth the mantras. But this *maunam,* if it was to be really effective, could not have been limited to the purely physical silence; for even if one does not speak aloud, one is liable to think a lot about various things in the world. So the munis must have set about controlling their thoughts also; and discovered, by practice, that the most effective manner in which it could be done, unless indeed they resorted to physical (Yogic) contrivances which would render them unconscious,

[52] *Uṇādi Sūtras*—IV. 132, (p. 137 ed. T. R. Chintamani).

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was by fixing their thoughts upon one deity. This would involve faith in that deity. We have a story in the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa,[53] which is confirmatory of the above remarks. It is stated therein that a golden bird flew up to Keśin Dārbhya who had sat down, not being consecrated (i.e., not having gone through the ceremonies needed to entitle one to perform the sacrifice). The bird said, "Thou hast not been consecrated; I know the consecration; let me tell it to thee; I have sacrificed once; I am afraid of it perishing; thou dost know the imperishableness of that which once has been offered; it do thou (tell) me". The Brāhmaṇa proceeds thus: "He said yes". They two discussed together...... He said, 'the bodies are consecrated by that sacrifice; but the man is consecrated indeed, whose gods within are consecrated.' ....Now the imperishableness of what has once been offered is faith; he who sacrifices with faith, his sacrifice perishes not. Imperishableness is the waters, both those which are in these worlds, and those which are about the self. He who, knowing 'In me there is imperishableness' sacrifices, his sacrifice perishes not. This imperishableness of what has once been offered Keśin Dārbhya proclaimed to the golden bird".[54] The above story shows clearly that Keśins (or munis) emphasised the importance of faith, and also of the knowledge of the imperishable in man. This was conviction of the munis from the time of the Ṛg Veda onwards. Unfortunately the story of the silent meditation of innumerable munis who lived throughout the centuries starting from the days of the Ṛg Veda, must remain untold. Theirs was a path of self-realisation

[53] VII. 4.

[54] Keith, *Ṛg Veda Brāhmaṇas*, pp. 385—6.

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which could not be trodden by common people. It could be understood only by those who lived the munis' life and gained their knowledge by personal experience. Hence it was not given any publicity at all. Yet, it was nothing more than the well-known *bhakti mārga* of the later days. If that were so, who was the God that was meditated upon by the munis in the Ṛg Veda period? From the hymns themselves we cannot obtain any clue, for the gods known to the hymners were different from the god that would have been meditated upon by the Keśins. The gods praised in the hymns were all only functionaries who ministered to the wants of mortals, and received in their turn oblations from them. At any rate, that was the manner in which the gods were conceived of by the hymners themselves. The munis, on the other hand, gave no oblations to, and wanted no favours of, the gods. On the other hand, they were equal to these gods and like them did good to mortals. "The long-haired being is aware of our call, and a sweet gladdening friend".[55] Thus they seem to have assigned for themselves certain tasks for the welfare of mankind. But this would be done only by those munis who had reached the highest stage in their special development. Others there would yet be who stood lower in rank, and their progress would be just sufficient to make them the attendants upon any one of the Vedic deities. These Keśins or munis who were thus acting as the agents of Rudra are alluded to in the Atharva Veda hymn quoted above. It is in this way that the reference to the Keśins as the attendants of Rudra has to be understood. If this view be correct, these Keśins were in a sense Rudra devotees. The high position

[55] RV. X. 136. 6.

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attained by such worshippers of Rudra must have been understood by the people in the days of the Atharva Veda; and there must have arisen a number of people who would desire to emulate them. Many might have failed in their endeavours, and thus become objects of scorn. Their abandonment of the Vedic rites would have been disapproved by the orthodox people who would therefore have called such men by the name of Vrātyas (the heterodox). The mistakes committed by these would have the result of creating a feeling of distrust against all who gave up the religious practices. It then became necessary to open the eyes of men to the greatness of the true Vrātyas or persons who ceased to conform to Brahmanic conventions because of their superiority to the ordinary run. It was for that purpose that a whole chapter of the Atharva Veda was composed glorifying the Vrātya.[56] "For him (the Vrātya), from the intermediate direction of the eastern quarter, they (gods) made the archer Bhava attendant. The archer Bhava attends him (as) attendant from the intermediate direction of the eastern quarter; not Śarva, not Bhava, not Īśāna injures him nor his cattle nor his fellows, who knoweth thus. 2. For him........ they made the archer Śarva the attendant...... 3. For him...... they made the archer Paśupati attendant...... 4. they made the archer, the formidable god (Ugra) attendant...... 5. Rudra the attendant....... 6. Mahādēva attendant. 7....... Īśāna attendant".[57] In the Atharva Veda XV. 11, it is stated that any one who "entertains such a Vrātya will gain the road that the gods travel" "will gain possession of the waters", "will obtain what is dear",

[56] AV. XV, 5. 1.
[57] Whitney, AV. pp. 778-79.

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etc., etc. The Atharva Veda[58] mentions similarly other benefits conferred upon those who honoured the Vrātyas. Whether or not the word Vrātya has to be taken to mean, like the Skambha and the Brahmacārin,[59] one of the forms of Brahman, as is mentioned in the Cūḷika Upaniṣad,[60] it is clear that from this time onwards there must have developed in the popular mind a reverence to religious mendicants who wandered about the land mostly as Śaiva ascetics, without conforming themselves to the Brahmanic conventions. It can be reasonably inferred that such itinerant ascetics were worshippers of Rudra or Śiva rather than of any other god, for we notice in the Vrātya hymn[61] that protection is granted to these people by Bhava, Śarva, Ugra, etc., and not by any other god. Again, Śiva was the ideal of mendicants, for Śiva alone of all the deities is spoken of in later religious literature as the mendicant god (Kapālin), and even in the Ṛg-Vedic hymn which extols the muni, Rudra is mentioned as having the (ascetic's) water-pot (Viṣasya pātra). The difference between the munis and the Vrātyas seems to have been that the former were worshippers (of any god) who ultimately rose to a position of equality with the gods, the latter were only ordinary Śiva devotees who took to a life of mendicancy for the purpose of developing such qualities as would ultimately make them eligible to gain the presence of Śiva. Necessarily, the Vrātyas were bound to be of different stages of development. The large part of them would be no better (perhaps even much worse) than the common people, but a

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[58] XV. 12 and 13.
[59] AV. X. 78 and AV. XI. 5 respectively.
[60] Deussen's *Upaniṣads*, pp. 637, 640, referred to by Whitney in his AV. *Saṁhiṭa*, p. 769.
[61] AV. XV.



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few would have become fit for 'god-inspiration'. These few would have become munis, but it was not likely that many would recognise them as great souls; for there is a story in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa where a real muni who had entered into a state of ecstasy was regarded by his contemporaries as mad. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa Book VI. 33 runs thus; "He repeats the Aitaśa pralāpa. The muni Aitaśa beheld (i.e. received a revelation of) the Agner Āyuḥ (Agni's life, etc.), which, some say, renders the sacrifice efficacious. He said to his sons, 'Sons, I have seen "Agni's Life" and will speak of it. Do not fail to attend to what I say'. He then obtained (by revelation) the verse beginning '**etāh** aśvāh etc.' Abhyagni, of the family of Aitaśa came unseasonably, and stopped his mouth, saying 'our father is mad'. His father said 'go, become destitute of energy, thou who hast stopped my words. I should otherwise have made kine live a hundred years, and men a thousand, etc., etc.". The hymn referred to in the above story must apparently have been revealed by Aitaśa to some other person, on a later occasion; for it is included in another chapter of the Atharva Veda.[62] That means that though some regarded these ecstatic people as insane, there were still others who reverenced them and treasured their utterances. The latter class of people would be the men who attached themselves as disciples to the real Vrātyas. Hence there sprang up in the land many Śiva yōgins, who attached greater importance to a life of austerity and meditation upon god than to the performance of sacrificial rituals and the like. Not caring for the Vedic ceremonies, they could not be expected to place any trust in the smṛtis of the later days and so

[62] XX, 129. 1 ff.

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they ought to have been quite willing to take into their fold all persons, irrespective of caste, who had the requisite qualifications for a life of devotion. That was why the word Vrātya came to have its later significance of a despiser of Vedic rites and religious institutions, and why in the epic period the Vrātya came to be held in contempt. He was classed with 'the off-scourings of society, such as incendiaries, poisoners, pimps, adulterers, abortionists, drunkards and so on'.[63] This freedom from caste ideas became the predominant characteristic of bhaktas in later days. Thus it appears that Śaivism which now happens to be one of the most prominent forms of Hinduism had its origin even in the days of the Atharva Veda.

[63] Whitney, AV. p. 769. M.B.H. V. 35; 46; 1227.

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## CHAPTER II.

### RUDRA OF THE BRĀHMAṆAS.

The belief in the terrific nature of Rudra, which was noticeable in the Atharva Veda gained still greater prominence in the age of the Brāhmaṇas. Men were so much accustomed to the notion that Rudra was a god of punishment that they thought of him as punishing even the gods when they violated the established moral code; for Rudra is spoken of in the Aitarēya Brāhmaṇa as being the embodiment of all dread forms, and as having been created conjointly by all the gods to punish even Prajāpati, the creator of the universe. The story as narrated (in the 9th and 10th Khaṇḍas of the 13th Adhyāya of the Aitarēya Brāhmaṇa—Keith : *Ṛg-Veda Brāhmaṇas* translated pp. 185, 186) runs thus:—"Prajāpati felt love towards his own daughter, the sky, some say, Uṣas, others. Having become a stag he approached her in the form of a deer. The gods saw him "A deed unknown Prajāpati now does." They sought one to punish him; they found him not among one another. Those most dread forms they brought together in one place. Brought together they became this deity here........ To him the gods said 'Prajāpati here hath done a deed unknown; pierce him'. 'Be it so' he replied, 'Let me choose a boon from you'. 'Choose', (they said). He chose...... the overlordship of cattle...... Having aimed at him he pierced him (Prajāpati); being pierced he flew upwards...... The seed of Prajāpati outpoured ran; it became a pond...... It they surrounded with Agni....Then Agni Vaiśvānara caused it

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to move. The first part of it....became yonder Āditya; the second became Bhṛgu....The third....became the Ādityas. The coals became the Aṅgirases...... The extinguished coals became black cattle; the reddened earth ruddy (cattle). The ash which was there crept about in diverse forms, the buffalo, the 'gayal', the antelope, the camel, the ass and these ruddy animals. To them this god said 'Mine is this, mine is what remains'. Him they deprived of a claim by this verse which is recited as addressed to Rudra, 'O! father of the Maruts, let thy goodwill approach us; do thou not sever us from the sight of the sun; Do thou, O hero, be merciful *to our steeds*'; so should he say, not 'towards us' (in the last line); this god is not likely to attack offspring then—"May we be multiplied with children, 'O thou of Rudra', so should he say, not 'O Rudra', to avoid the use of the actual name. Or rather he should recite 'Weal for us let him make'; with 'weal' he begins, for weal for all...... This verse, being without mention (of the name of the deity) though addressed to Rudra is (Śānta) appeased...... It is a gāyatri, etc., etc.".

The above passages of the Brāhmaṇa reveal the mind of the religious speculators of that period most forcibly. Evidently they were anxious to find an explanation for the origin of the name Paśupati as applied to Rudra. The name has already occurred in the Yajur Veda and the Atharva Veda hymns. It ordinarily connotes 'the lord or the protector of cattle;' but Rudra was, in their imagination a fierce deity and the name, which was apparently inappropriate, had to be therefore explained as appropriate. Hence it was that the story, mentioned above, was constructed. The

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terrific being who combined in himself all the dreadful aspects of all the other gods is made to ask for a boon, the lordship of cattle. Once the boon was granted, he manifested his power by piercing even the lord of creation. After the gods have with great difficulty made Prajāpati's seed develop into the sun, Bhṛgu, the Ādityas and different orders of cattle, the fierce god claims as his portion all the beasts. To the gods, the very idea that Rudra would protect the cattle, seemed unbelievable, for their fear was that Rudra would at once destroy them. So the gods discovered a means of averting such a contingency. They picked out that particular verse in the Ṛg-Veda (II. 33. 1) where protection to the steeds (cattle) is definitely requested. The author of the Brāhmaṇa distinctly cautions the reciter of the hymn against saying 'be merciful *to us*' and advises him to preserve the original and say 'Be merciful *to our steeds*'. Fearing that worshippers of 'Rudra' might unwittingly recite the succeeding verse in the same hymn which contains the name of Rudra "May we be multiplied with children, O Rudra", the Brāhmaṇa lays down the direction that the word 'Rudra' should be altered to 'Rudrīya' meaning 'O, thou of Rudra'. The point to be noticed here is that men (of that age) felt that if the god was addressed by even the name 'Rudra', he would do something very terrible to the people. That was why the god was addressed 'Thou, of Rudra' implying that though Rudra was an unmentionably terrific god, if he be spoken of as only belonging to Rudra (and not Rudra himself), he could not be so fierce. Even this device was thought of as only partially satisfactory, and so another advice is immediately offered, asking the worshipper to choose

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"Weal for us let him make",[1] because that is a definite request for the welfare of 'men, women and cows'. Then the god would not be a terror-inspiring god but would be only a bestower of welfare or prosperity.

There is a difference between the Aitarēya and the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas regarding the origin of Rudra. The latter makes no attempt to construct a story to explain the terrific aspect of Rudra. The account given therein seeks merely to explain, in its own way, how the eight names[2] (Bhava, Śarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Mahādeva, Rudra, Īśāna and Aśani) came to be applied to Rudra. Keith believes that the two names Mahādeva and Īśāna are of special importance and that a sectarian worship is indicated therein.[3] He notices that these two words are not found in the Vājasaneya Samhitā,[4] or in the Taittirīya Samhitā,[5] and since they occur in the Vrātya hymn,[6] the Kauṣītaki was a later composition than the Aitarēya. It is open to doubt if such a conclusion can be maintained in the absence of further evidence. On the other hand, the fact that the Kauṣītaki does not make Rudra a terrific deity seems to be a valid reason to infer that the Aitarēya is nearer in point of time to the Yajur Veda than the Kauṣītaki. If the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is taken to be later than the Aitarēya and the Kauṣītaki, the last might have been the earliest of all the three; for, Rudra is conceived of as a really frightful deity, not very different from an evil spirit, in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. It is possible

[1] RV. I. 43. 6.
[2] *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* Adhyāya, VI. 1—9;—Keith *Ṛg-Veda Brāhmaṇas*, p. 377 ff.
[3] RV. B. Trs. p. 25 ff.
[4] In Adhyāya, XVI.
[5] IV. 5. 1.
[6] AV. XV, 5.

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to conclude that Rudra's good qualities (with which he was endowed from the time of the Ṛg-Veda) came to be gradually forgotten and in popular estimation he became an object of terror. This is evidenced by some passages in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. When describing the manner in which the Trayambaka offerings are to be made, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states "And, accordingly when he performs these offerings, he either does so hoping that thus no arrow (misfortune) will hit any of his, or because the gods did so. And thereby he delivers from Rudra's power both the descendants that are born unto him and those that are unborn".[7] They are (offered) to Rudra; Rudra's indeed is the dart; and hence these offerings belong to Rudra.[8] Again in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, II. 6. 2. 6, Rudra hankering after the sacrificers' cattle is alluded to:—"They (the cattle) may be anointed (with ghee)—for the havis is anointed—but let them rather be unanointed; for indeed, Rudra would be hankering after the (sacrificers') cattle, if he were to anoint the cakes; let them therefore be unanointed". Rudra is, in this Brāhmaṇa, even conceived of as a sort of evil spirit roving about from place to place, and so the sacrificer is requested to offer the cake on the roads, cross-roads, etc. "Having removed all (the cakes from the potsherds) into one dish, and taken a fire-brand from the Dakṣiṇa-fire, he walks aside towards the north—for that is the region of that god—and offers. He offers on a road—for, on a road that god roves; he offers on a cross-road,—for the cross-road, indeed, is known to be his (Rudra's) favourite haunt".[9] Still further down there is the following verse:—"The sacrificer now takes those

[7] II. 6. 2. 9.
[8] ŚB. II. 6. 2. 3.
[9] ŚB. II. 6. 2. 7.

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(remains of the cakes) into his joined palms and throws them upwards higher than a cow can reach. Thereby they cut out his (Rudra's) darts from their bodies".[10] The sacrificer is urged to send away Rudra after giving him provisions, e.g. "Having then packed them with two net-work baskets and tied them to the two ends of either a bamboo staff, or the beam of a balance, he steps aside towards the north; and if he meets with a tree or a stake or a bamboo or an ant-hill, he fastens them thereon, with the text 'These, O Rudra, are thy provisions, therewith depart beyond the Mūjavats....... with thy bow unstrung and muffled up'. Whereby he means to say, 'Depart propitious, not injuring us'; 'clad in a skin'—whereby he lulls him to sleep; for while sleeping he injures no one".[11] That is not all. The immediately following verses clearly indicate that Rudra, was regarded in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa period as an evil deity who would render his worshipper even impure. How else is the following to be explained? "They then turn to the right about and return without looking back. Having returned thither, they touch water; for they have been performing a ceremony relating to Rudra, and water is a means of purification—with water that (means of) purification they accordingly purify themselves.[12] Thereupon he shaves his hair and beard, and takes up the fire (of the uttaravēdi)—for only after changing his place to the ordinary sacrificial ground he performs the (full-moon) sacrifice on that fire, etc., etc."

From the foregoing quotations, it will be clear that the old conception of Rudra had become greatly

[10] ŚB. II. 6. 2. 16.
[11] ŚB. II. 6. 2. 17.
[12] ŚB. II. 6. 2. 18.



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changed in the days of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. He came to be regarded as a grim deity who might do injury to sacrificers and their cattle. Even the Śatarudrīya hymn is regarded, by the compilers of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, as having been composed with the object of appeasing the wrath of the terrific Rudra whose origin is narrated in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. This story also, like the story found in the Aitarēya, reflects the prevalent conception that Rudra was the embodiment of wrath. It runs as follows:—"As to why he performs the Śatarudrīya offering. When Prajāpati had become disjointed,[13] the deities departed from him. Only one god did not leave him, to wit, manyu (wrath). Extended, he remained within. He (Prajāpati) cried, and the tears of him that fell down settled on manyu. He became the hundred-headed, thousand-eyed, hundred-quivered Rudra. And the other drops that fell down, spread over these worlds in countless numbers, by thousands; and inasmuch as they originate from crying (rud), they are called Rudras (roarers). That hundred-headed, thousand-eyed, hundred-quivered Rudra, with his bow strung and his arrow fitted to the strings, was inspiring fear, being in quest of food. The gods were afraid of him. They spoke to Prajāpati, 'We are afraid of this one, lest he should hurt us'. He spoke, 'gather food for and appease him therewith'. They gathered for him that food, the Śatarudrīya (offering), and thereby appeased him, and inasmuch as they thereby appeased the hundred-headed Rudra, it is called......... Śatarudrīya".[14] From this account it is clear that the

[13]Cf. Prajāpati being pierced by Rudra (Bhūtapati) in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.*

[14]ŚB. IX. Khaṇḍa, 1st Adhyāya, 1st *Brāhmaṇa.*

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author of the story conceived of Rudra only as a destroying deity and not as a protecting deity at all. On the other hand, the author of the story in the Aitarēya thought of Rudra, both as a terrific god and as bestower of prosperity upon all, though he also gave greater prominence to the terrific aspect, as is evidenced by his detailed instructions as to which verse of the Ṛg-Veda was to be used and how. The Śatarudrīya hymn itself, as we have noticed, indicates both the aspects of the god. Hence, it was open to the author of this portion of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa to think of Rudra in his beneficent aspect also. If he did not do so, it only shows that the conditions of the time when he lived were such as to make him think of Rudra as an evil spirit. What then could have been the altered conditions of life at that time? A dim picture of the times is reflected in some of the verses appearing in the fifth Khaṇḍa.[15] "Now, once upon a time, Svarbhānu, the Asura, struck the sun with darkness, and stricken with darkness, he did not shine. Sōma and Rudra removed that darkness of his; and freed from evil he burns yonder. And in like manner does that (king) thereby enter darkness—or darkness enters him—when he puts those unworthy of sacrifice in contact with the sacrifice; and he does indeed now put those unworthy of sacrifice—either Śūdras or whomsoever—in contact with the sacrifice. It is Sōma and Rudra that remove that darkness of his; and freed from evil he becomes consecrated". Leaving aside the removal of the sun's darkness as irrelevant to our present purpose, one notices an allusion to kings putting Śūdras (and others unworthy of sacrifice) 'into contact' with the sacrifice,

[15] ŚB. V. 3. 2. 2.

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and to Śiva (along with Sōma) purifying or consecrating the king who had become impure by so doing. Herein there is unmistakeable evidence of Śūdras taking part (what part, one cannot say) in sacrifices. Necessarily, such a sacrifice ought to have been regarded impure by the orthodox. The Brāhmaṇa also states that the king 'entered darkness' or became impure by so doing. Then a special function (which has not been till now attributed to Rudra at all) is assigned to Rudra. He purifies the impure king. It is doubtful, if the strictly orthodox section of the community would accept this kind of purification. Very probably not. That is perhaps the reason why in another part of the same Brāhmaṇa, even Rudra himself is regarded impure (as noticed above). The only way in which one can reconcile these conflicting views is to presume that at the time of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, two views prevailed about Rudra; one being the strictly orthodox view that Rudra could not purify the impure and that by interfering in such matters, he only made himself impure. The other was the more liberal view that impurity could be removed by Rudra, the only God who could do it. This latter view must have been very acceptable to those who attached prominence to the Atharva Veda hymns about the Vrātya, who (as noticed above) was an unconventional person, but one who led a life of austerity and wandered about, his thoughts centred upon Rudra. This cleavage between the two sections of the people was bound to widen with the lapse of time.

It was those who regarded Rudra as an impure deity that conceived of him as a most terrific being of whom they could not help being afraid. Why was the

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idea of fear so predominant in their minds? The only possible explanation seems to be that they were ignorant of the real nature of gods; for ignorance is always the root cause of fear. That they were ignorant is amply evidenced by their writings. A discerning student of the Brāhmaṇas cannot help feeling that many explanations offered of the origin of the different deities, and of the religious practices then in vogue are unsatisfactory, irrational and hence unconvincing. There is a marked difference in tone between the simple, unambiguous, straight-forward appeals which were addressed to the gods by the Vedic hymners, and the queer, far-fetched and fantastic theories put forth dogmatically by the authors of the Brāhmaṇas. These last undoubtedly held the Vedas in great esteem, but they did not comprehend them. They magnified the importance of the outward form of Brahmanical rituals, introduced innumerable meaningless details, and by the variety and complexity of their religious practices, more or less effectually shut out their truth and inner significance. This they did because of their ignorance. Thus they could not help regarding gods as veritable powers of evil who must be coaxed, cajoled and flattered if they were to be rendered harmless. Rudra's attributes as reflected in the Vedas admitted of the possibility of such a distortion. That was why the authors of the Brāhmaṇas imagined Rudra to be such a fierce deity that they were even afraid of mentioning his name. But this conception of Rudra got changed when the Upaniṣads came to be written.

*The conception of Rudra in the Upaniṣads.*

One cannot be positive as to the interval between the Brāhmaṇic period and that of the Upaniṣads; but

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one can infer that it must have been rather long. Religious conceptions must have undergone considerable change and the popular intellect also greatly advanced. Great thinkers could not have been for ever satisfied with the vague notions about cosmology and theology that prevailed among the common folk, and hence they must have attempted a real solution of matters spiritual and temporal. It was in such an age that ideas about Rudra (as about other deities) got clarified. The Brāhmaṇas were mainly treatises explaining sacrificial rituals. Sacrifices themselves must have been performed mostly by the powerful monarchs for special purposes; e.g., for the expiation of sins incurred in warfare or for their coronation, etc. They were occasions when learned Brahmans flocked to the palace in large numbers from distant places. Those would also be opportunities for the display of intellectual skill and genuine scholarship. We have an instance of such philosophical tournaments in the Bṛhadāraṇayaka Upaniṣad. The whole of the third Adhyāya is a narration of Yāgñavalkya's discussion with, and victory over, a number of priests and scholars, to wit, Aśvala, Jaratkārava, Ārtabhāga, Bhūjyu Lāhyāvani, Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa, Kahola Kauśītakēya, Gārgi Vācaknavī, Uddālaka Āruṇi, and Vidagdha Śākalya. The last of these had, owing to his defeat, to lose his head. "But him Śākalya did not know, and so indeed his head fell off".[16] It is noteworthy that in the contest above mentioned, Yāgñavalkya taunts Śākalya with the question 'Śākalya, have those Brahmans made you their coal-destroyer'.[17] This means 'Have these priests made you their cat's paw?' (Max-muller's suggestion); in

[16] Br. Up. III. 9. 26—Hume, p. 125.
[17] III. 9. 18—Hume, p. 123.

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other words, "have they who are unable to enter into a controversy with me chosen you to sponsor their cause and suffer the consequence?". Here, one can see Yāgñavalkya's veiled contempt for the purohitas. It is more or less clear that those who remained with the kings and specialised in the knowledge of sacrificial rituals, etc., had no knowledge of the inner significance of these rites. It was only people who went away to the forests and pondered over these problems that obtained solutions for them through their intuition. They also came into contact with discerning monarchs, e.g., Yāgñavalkya with Janaka.[18] Hence it became possible for the kings sometimes to know more about high philosophical truths than some learned Brahmans whose knowledge was confined to their books. As instances, we have Ajātaśatru, king of Benares,[19] who was able to prove to Gārgya the latter's ignorance of Brahman, and to make him request Ajātaśatru to instruct him.[20] Such thinkers who dwelt in the woods would not all have been merely preserving the teachings that would have descended down to them from their gurus. Many ought to have arrived at original solutions of their own. In the case of Satyakāma Jābāla, it is seen that his teacher, Gautama Haridrumata merely asked him to 'follow' (tend) 400 lean, weak cows. That was all the instruction, according to the story,[21] that was given to the student. Several years afterwards the teacher gave him the finishing touch to his self-education.[21a] This very same Satyakāma Jābāla

[18] Br. Up. 4th Adhyāya,
[19] Br. Up. II. 1. 14.
[20] Br. Up. II. 1. 15.
[21] Chānd. Up. IV. 4. 5.
[21a] The account in the Upaniṣad is that the bull, the fire, the swan and the diver-bird taught him. That is to be rationally understood only as self-education.

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became later the guru of Upakōśala Kamalāyana.[22] He also is spoken of as having been instructed by the fires;[23] in other words, he was, like Jābāla, one who led the life of contemplation. It was such great philosophers who threshed out the hidden meanings of the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas, and discovered the highest truth which finds expression in the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads. Many of them were preserved in the memory of the ancient thinkers who sometimes attached a sanctity to those scriptures. This is reflected in the lists of traditional teachers appended to some adhyāyas of some Upaniṣads; e.g. in the Bṛhad. Up. II Adhyāya; VI Brāhmaṇa, we have about sixty names. Similar lists are found in Bṛhad. Upaniṣad in IV. 6. 1, in VI. 5. 1 and VI. 5. 4. When learning of the highest order was thus transmitted by word of mouth by successive gurus to students, it was quite possible for most of the teaching to have been forgotten, partially understood and even misunderstood, and what would remain would very probably be but the quintessence of such philosophical speculation. During this period of intellectual and spiritual progress, the nature of the gods figuring in the Vedas and in the Brāhmaṇas must have been carefully analysed and rightly understood. It was natural that the views formed of them by the Upaniṣadic philosophers were different from those held by the men of the Brāhmaṇic period. In fact, such difference was bound to arise even between the earlier and later Upaniṣadic thinkers themselves. There would be fewer points of resemblance between the Vedic description of a particular deity and the Upaniṣadic

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[22] Ch. Up. IV. 10.

[23] Ibid, IV. 10. 4. ff.

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description of the same deity. Hence, these points of agreement or difference may themselves be employed for roughly determining the question whether an Upaniṣad was a later one or an earlier one. Of the chief Upaniṣads, (i.e. those which have been commented upon by Śankara) some are found to be, when this test is applied, very early. For instance, the Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad shows itself undoubtedly to be the oldest because it mentions all the Vedic gods Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Īśāna, Mṛtyu, Pūṣan, etc., and roughly preserves the original characteristics of these old deities.[24] Recognising Indra, Varuṇa, Rudra, etc., as powerful gods, the Upaniṣad seeks to find out an explanation for their being endowed with prowess by saying that these 'rulers among the gods' were created from Brahma's superior form 'Kṣatra-hood'.[25] The same Upaniṣad, also makes much of the details of sacrificial ritual; e.g. its opening chapter is a description of the world as a sacrificial horse. On the other hand, one does not notice such prominence to the Vedic deities in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, though it was also, very probably, a comparatively early Upaniṣad. Rudra is not mentioned in it at all. There is an account of Indra; but he appears as one who learns, after enormous labour, the meaning of Brahman, from Prajāpati.[26] There is almost a total neglect of these deities in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, except the mere mention of their names in the opening hymns of invocation. The Aitarēya, Kauṣītaki, Kena, etc., also similarly do not pay much attention to the Vedic deities. There even seems to have developed a

[24] Br. Up. I. 4. 11—17.
[25] Br. Up. I. 4. 11.
[26] Ch. Up. VIII. 7. I to VIII, 12. 6.



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feeling that the Vedic gods were unworthy of the great honour done to them. That is the impression one gathers from a study of the third Khaṇḍa of the Kena Upaniṣad which is an account of the ignorance that these gods evidenced about Brahman. The story, as narrated there, is that Brahman appeared before them in the shape of a 'wonderful being' and not knowing it, Agni, Vāyu, and Indra tried their skill with it and each in turn was unable to over-power it or understand it. But when Brahman disappeared from their view, Umā, 'daughter of the snowy mountain' appeared before them to tell them that it was Brahman.[27] When people came to know that Brahman was superior to all the gods and that it was the only one to be worshipped, the fear of death, disease, etc., vanished from the minds of the intelligent. In proof of this, we have the story of Naciketas in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad. His father offers him in anger to Yama (death) but the youth had no fear at all. He tells Yama, 'In the heavenly world—is no fear whatsoever. Not there art thou. Not from old age does one fear. Over both having crossed hunger and thirst too, gone beyond sorrow, one rejoices in the heaven-world'.[28] This youth learnt from Yama the truth about the passage of the soul from the body to immortality. 'A person of the measure of a thumb is the inner soul, ever seated in the heart of creatures. Him one should draw out from one's own body like an arrow shaft out from a reed, with firmness. Him one should know, as the Pure, the Immortal....' Then Naciketas, having received this knowledge declared by Death, and the entire rule of Yoga, attained Brahman and became free from passion, free from death; and so

[27] Kena, IV Khaṇḍa.
[28] Kaṭha I. 12.

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may any other who knows this in regard to the soul (Ātman).[29]

This discovery by the Upaniṣadic thinkers of the immortality of the soul hidden in every one's heart was of prime importance in the evolution of religious thought. Gods were no longer to be dreaded for their might. The feeblest mortal had a force within himself which could defy the might of the mightiest of destructive powers. When this grand truth was realised, gods were looked upon from a new angle of vision. They now appeared as but the agents and servants of some supreme power who abided both in the Universe, and 'in the heart of creatures'. Hence the Īśa Upaniṣad declares "By the lord 'Īśa' enveloped must this all be—whatever moving thing there is in the moving world. With this renounced, thou mayest enjoy".[30] The gods performed their respective functions because of their fear of the supreme power. "Through fear of Him the wind (Vāyu) doth blow. Through fear of Him the Sun (Sūrya) doth rise. Through fear of Him both Agni (fire) and Indra and death (Mṛtyu) as fifth do speed along".[31] And one who attains Brahman need not, therefore, fear the gods at all. On the other hand, such a one enjoys the highest bliss which is several times greater than the Bliss of Indra, the greatest of gods.[32] When such ideas began to be grasped, the relative inferiority of the knowledge of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas to the knowledge of the ultimate truth was also perceived.[33] Those who accepted these views

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[29]Kaṭha, VI, 17 & 18.
[30]Īśa. Stanza 1.
[31]Taitt. Up. II. 8.
[32]*ibid.*
[33]Muṇḍ. Up. I. 4. & 5.

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ought to have aspired to gain this higher knowledge (the knowledge of the imperishable). They gained it through austerity and faith, and not through sacrifices. "They who practise austerity (tapas), and faith (śraddhā) in the forest, the peaceful (śānta), knowers who live on alms, depart passionless (vi-rāga), through the door of the sun, to *where* is that immortal person (Puruṣa), even the imperishable spirit (Ātman)".[34] This path would not have appealed to the sincere believers in the efficacy of sacrificial ritual. Hence the same Upaniṣad advises the scrupulous observance of religious ceremonies also.[35] At the same time it is also distinctly stated below that sacrificial forms are ineffective against rebirth.[36] As if with the view of helping people to realise the imperishable, the doctrine of Brahma-Ātman is discussed in the sacred Muṇḍaka, and the advice is given that the Puruṣa should be found in the heart. "The Person (Puruṣa) himself is everything here; work (karma) and austerity (tapas) and Brahma, beyond death. He who knows that, set in the secret place (of the heart)—he here on earth, my friend, rends asunder the knot of ignorance".[37] This suggestion unfortunately, cannot be carried out by all, for the option of making Himself visible is entirely His own (the Puruṣa's). Knowledge alone is of no value; nor sacrifices. "This soul (Ātman) is not to be obtained by instruction, nor by intellect, nor by much learning. He is to be obtained only by the one whom He chooses; to such a one that soul (Ātman) reveals His own person".[38] Here we

[34] Muṇḍ. Up. I. 2. 11.
[35] Ibid. I. 2. 1.
[36] Ibid. I. 2. 8 & 12. 10.
[37] Ibid. II. 1. 10.
[38] Ibid. III. 2. 3.

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have the indication of a new path, which does not consist in sacrifices, or knowledge, but which is one which will enable man to obtain Divine grace. This divine grace is mentioned (as 'prasāda') in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad.[39] "When through the grace (prasāda) of the creator (Dhātu) he beholds the greatness of the soul (Ātman)."[40] But Śaṅkara does not take the word to mean 'grace'. He takes the compound word 'Dhātu prasādāt' to mean 'through the tranquillity of the senses'. The word is used unambiguously in the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad. 'By the efficacy of his austerity and by the grace of God, the wise Śvētāśvatara in proper manner declared Brahma'. (Tapah prabhāvāt dēva prasādācca brahma ha Śvētāśvatarōtha vidvān).[41] This importance attached to divine grace may be regarded as mainly responsible for the rise in importance of the bhakti school of thinkers. The Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad may be taken to be representative of that type of thinking. The author effects a happy compromise between the *Jñāna* path and the *Bhakti* path. The former will lead to a realisation of the ultimate truth, but the latter is an indispensable preliminary (as has been clearly expressed in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad passage quote above). If the path of devotion is to be gone through by the aspirant after final release from earthly bondage, he must worship God and gain god-vision. "The soul certainly is impotent over the cause of pleasure and pain".[42] Those who have followed after meditation (dhyāna) and abstraction (yoga), saw the self-power (ātmaśakti) of God (dēva) hidden in his own qualities. He is the

[39] Hume p. 350 n. 1.
[40] ŚV. Up. II. 20.
[41] Ibid. Up. VI 21.
[42] Ibid. Up. I. 2.

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one who rules over all these causes Kāla, Svabhāva, Niyati, etc.[43] Again, "That which is joined together as perishable and imperishable, as manifest and unmanifest—the lord (Īśa, Potentate) supports it all. Now, without the lord, the soul (Ātman) is bound, because of being an enjoyer; by knowing God (Deva) one is released from all fetters. There are two unborn ones; the knowing (lord) and the unknowing (individual soul), the omnipotent and the impotent".[44] It is this cosmic purpose that ought to be worshipped. He is described thus: "That god faces all the quarters of heaven. Aforetime he was born, and he it is within the womb. He has been born forth. He will be born. He stands opposite creatures, having his face in all directions". The worshipper thus gets a picture of the god whom he is to worship. But it is a highly difficult conception capable of being formed only by men of a superior order of intellect. Hence the author hits upon the effective device of identifying this unknown and unknowable god with the very well-known god Rudra. "For truly, Rudra (the terrible) is the one—they (who know the one) stand not for a second—who rules all the world with his ruling powers".[45] But Rudra is now, unlike in the Brāhmaṇic period, understood to be the one great god of the Universe. "He the Protector, after creating all beings, merges them together at the end of time. Having an eye on every side and a face on every side, having an arm on every side and a foot on every side, the one god faces together with hands, with wings, creating the heaven and the earth—He who is the source and origin of the

[43] Śvēt. Up. I. 3.
[44] Ibid. I. 8.
[45] Ibid. III. 2.

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gods, the ruler of all, Rudra, the great seer, who of old created the Golden Germ (Hiraṇyagarbha)—may He endow us with clear intellect".[46] When the author thus gave the grandest attributes to Rudra, he took care to see that people did not imagine a new Rudra, quite distinct from the old Vedic deity; for that would only add one to the existing number of deities. The object of the author was to choose any one of the Vedic gods and use him for Dhyāna and Yoga, so that the worshipper might, through that means, attain the highest knowledge. If so, why did the author pitch upon Rudra and not any other? Various reasons may be assigned for the author's choice; e.g. (1) of all the Vedic gods, Rudra combined in himself the functions of protection and destruction.[47] The created being can seek protection for himself and destruction for his enemies. The less advanced person would require protection of his body, his children and his cattle (mānas tō ke tanaye etc.)[48] and destruction of sorcerers[49] and of diseases.[50] The more evolved person would desire protection for his soul, or that part of him which could through ignorance get entangled with the perishable world, and ask for the destruction of his sins. In other words while the former would request the removal of suffering, the latter would ask for the removal of the root cause of suffering. Hence Rudra was best fitted to be worshipped by all mortals. (2) Again, Rudra was the one god of the Vedas who could be worshipped by all castes. The twice-born gave him oblations (the Śatarudrīya evidences it) and Śūdras also could count

[46] Śvēt. Up. III. 3 & 4.
[47] Śvēt. Up. III. 2. & 3.
[48] RV. I. 114. 8.
[49] A.V. X. I. 23.
[50] RV. II. 33. 4.

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upon his support as noticed above.[51] He is especially the god of even undeveloped creatures, the beasts, for he is Paśupati, the lord of beasts. (3) Further he was the only deity who could look after the needs of men in all the four Āśramas; for in the form of Agni (with whom he is more than any other god identified) he gave wisdom to the *Brahmacārin* (Jābāla and Kamalāyana were taught that way); as a bountiful god, he bestowed prosperity upon the Gṛhastha, and, as a mountain deity, he ministered to the comforts of the Vānaprastha and the Sannyāsin. (4) Rudra was also the special god who guarded the interests of those who did not conform themselves to the Brāhmaṇic conventions (the Vrātyas)...... Thus there was not a single class of people or a single region of the earth that did not fall under his jurisdiction. (5) Over and above these there is another reason. It is generally found that fear is at the bottom of all worship. It may differ in intensity in different individuals. The savage may have more of it than the enlightened person whose knowledge diminishes his fear somewhat. In evidence of this remark there is Arjuna's prayer to Śrī Kṛṣṇa,[52] when the latter assumed the fear-inspiring Viśvarūpa form. Throughout the eighteen chapters of the book, there is no other occasion when Arjuna offers a prayer to Kṛṣṇa although Kṛṣṇa tells him in several places that he is god himself. Particularly he describes himself in the tenth chapter as the cosmic person. Yet it was only when he looked at the terrible form that he began his prayer involuntarily.

Thus it is in the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad that we notice a first attempt to identify one of the Vēdic

[51] Śat. Br. V. 3. 2. 2.
[52] In Ch. XI of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

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deities with the cosmic Brahma. This identification would open the way for the exclusive worship of one god as a means of salvation. It is very probable that from this time onwards numbers of people belonging to different castes began the practice of praising and meditating upon Rudra in his various forms. Each one would conceive of the god according to his intellectual and spiritual development, and this would lead to the rise of several sects. The relation between the worshipper and his god being always personal, the more sincere he was, the more obstinate would he be in his views about the right mode of worship. The result was that the Rudra or the Śiva sects became numerous. It is this that is alluded to in the Maitrī Upaniṣad VII. 8. "Verily, the source of the net of delusion (Moha) is the fact of the association of one who is worthy of heaven with those who are not...... Now, there are those who are continually living upon handicraft. And moreover there are others who are town-beggars, who perform the sacrifices for the unworthy, who are disciples of Śūdras and who, though Śūdras, know the scriptures. And moreover, there are others, who are rogues, who wear their hair in a twisted knot.... And moreover there are others who falsely wear the red robe, ear-rings and skulls.... With these one should not associate". Here we have a clear mention of the different types of Śiva worshippers. That is unmistakable evidence of the prevalence of Śaivism or Rudraism. The author of this Upaniṣad disapproves of these practices, which, according to him, were due to Moha or illusion. Elsewhere he writes in a manner which seems to indicate his bias in favour of Viṣṇu.[53]

[53]Maitri. V. 2.; VII. 3.



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But the Maitrī Upaniṣad is not as much a bhakti Upaniṣad as the Śvētāśvatara; for Viṣṇu is not the only god that is given the highest place among the gods, fit for worship. He is classed with Brahma and Rudra. "They (Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra) are assuredly, the foremost forms of the supreme, the immortal, bodiless Brahman. To whichever one, each man is attached here, in its world he rejoices indeed. For thus has it been said;—"Verily, this whole world is Brahma".[54] These references also throw light upon the existence of the bhakti cult at that time. Since this Upaniṣad lays much stress upon the Vedic as opposed to non-Vedic doctrines,[55] it is clear that the practice of worshipping Brahma, Viṣṇu or Rudra, had begun at that time to be accepted as an essential preliminary to the realisation of the final truth, and, as if to satisfy the demand for some form of worship which might not have the evil consequence of misleading people, the author expatiates upon the meaning of the Gāyatri Mantra (which appears in RV. 3. 62. 10). Here is a compromise between the three paths, karma (or sacrifice), bhakti (or devotion), and jñāna (or knowledge). The Upaniṣad urges that the sacrificer should meditate upon the 'the divine splendour of Savitā' who is 'the meditator abiding in the intellect'.[56] He is called upon to worship the soul (Ātman) in the form of the sun by the use of the Sāvitri prayer. "Tat savitur vareṇyam. That desirable (splendour) of Savitṛ—yonder sun, verily, is Sāvitri". He, verily, is to be sought thus by one desirous of the soul (Ātman)—say the expounders of Brahman. " Bhargo dēvasya dhīmahi—May we

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[54] Maitri. Up. IV. 6.
[55] Ibid., VII. 10.
[56] Ibid., VI. 34.

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meditate upon (that) splendour of the god''. (Savitā), verily, is God. Hence upon that which is called his splendour do I meditate—say the expounders of Brahma. " Dhiyo yo naḥ pracōdayāt—And may he inspire these for us''—say the expounders of Brahma.[57]

This explanation of the Gāyatri mantra is followed up by an etymological explanation of Bharga so as to identify him with Rudra. " Rudra is called Bharga 'because he causes to dry up (bharjayati) say the expounders of Brahma''.[58] This is the first and the last instance when the epithet Bharga is applied to Rudra. One is therefore tempted to analyse the author's motive for such an explanation. Undoubtedly the Maitrī Upaniṣad was one of the later compositions. It must have been composed when Rudra worship had taken deep root in Indian soil. The fact seems to be that the author was aware of some Śiva worshippers meditating upon Rudra even while reciting the *Gāyatri*. The meaning of the line (in the *Gāyatri mantra*) according to this explanation would be "May we meditate upon Bharga—the drier up (of our sins)''. If this was the case, then it reveals the intensity of the longing for a single god, as opposed to a multitude of gods, who could be meditated upon by any one even while he was performing the Sandhyā rite which every Brahman was bound to perform. This rite was a very old one,[59] but it gathered several accretions as time advanced. These additions to the original rite were made by men living in different parts of the country and also in different periods of time, and hence they differ widely. But then this mode of utilising the

[57] Maitri. Up. VI. 7.

[58] Ibid. 6. 7.

[59] Ṣadvimśati Brāhmaṇam IV. 5. (quoted in P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar's pamphlet on the Gāyatri).

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Gāyatri mantra to suit each man's spiritual tendencies would not yield satisfaction to all; the practice began of enabling anyone so inclined to obtain the special initiation needed for the worship of some one god, e.g., Rudra or Viṣṇu. There is evidence in the Atharva Veda of the Vrātyas being some form of Śiva worshippers (for, otherwise, Bhava and Śarva would not have been mentioned as affording them special protection). There must have been similarly worshippers of Viṣṇu also, after the period when Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra came to be regarded as three forms of the cosmic Brahman. The holy life led by some of them should have won for them the regard and esteem of some pious folk who would desire to emulate them. They would have been instructed in the path of meditation by some of the pious Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava ascetics; and hence the convention of the Guru instructing or initiating the disciple must have become established. This practice grew in importance with the lapse of time and the author of the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad must have been one such person[60] worshipping Rudra. That is probably the reason why he gave a high place to Rudra. The sanctity attaching to such worshippers was responsible for the rise of a number of impostors, who assumed the garb of Śaiva devotees, but were in reality cheats who exploited for their own selfish ends the credulity of the masses. This in turn had the effect of creating in the minds of some, a revulsion of feeling and the scepticism thus generated was partly responsible for the faith even in the Vedas being lost. Yet the trait of the mendicant was in the Indian blood and

[60] "By the efficacy of his austerity and by the grace of God, the wise Śvētāśvatara in proper manner declared Brahma to ascetics of the most advanced stage as the supreme means of purification". Śv. Up. 6. 21.

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would show itself when the needed opportunity arose. Hence, another reform in religion appeared with the rite of initiation whereby the pious could satisfy their inner craving by becoming, without losing caste, Śiva-Yogins. They would not be condemners of Brahmanical rites—indeed, they would advocate them for the ordinary people—but they would themselves specialise in uttering such mantras as 'Ōm Namaḥ Śivāya' (Om, prostration to Śiva) and seek to obtain salvation through extravagant yogic practices also by imposing restraints upon themselves in matters of food, clothing, etc., so that they might not develop an unjustifiable love of worldly pleasures. The increase in the number of such people necessitated the framing of rules pertaining to their order, and since many of these rules were merely the codification of observances handed down from time immemorial by one generation to another of such specialised bhaktas, they were believed to be as ancient and as much entitled to sanctity as the Vedas themselves. These were known by the name of Śiva Āgamas and the tradition grew that they were revealed to man by God Śiva Himself. Yet, since they were believed in only by those who identified Rudra or Śiva with the cosmic Brahman, they were not embodied in the sacred Smṛtis which continued to exercise their sway upon the generality of the people who felt that whatever might be the hold that the Āgamas might have upon a section of the people, they had nothing to do with the common folk and hence could very well be ignored. In like manner rose the Vaiṣṇava Āgamas also. The feeling that the Āgamas were to be learnt only by a small section of the community who felt the longing for it and

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who had the requisite qualifications for it, was entertained not only by those who continued to observe the Vedic rules, but also by the followers of the Āgamic rules; for the latter too felt that the Āgamas were not for all but only for the chosen few, and that, if they were given wide publicity, more harm than good would ensue. That accounts for the fact that the Āgamas were kept carefully concealed, and they have not yet fully seen the light of day. The predominant characteristic of the Āgamas is their exclusiveness. The Śiva Āgamas not only emphasise the necessity to worship Śiva in the prescribed manner but also insist upon the subordination of every other God to Śiva. He alone must be regarded as the highest Being, identical with the cosmic Puruṣa and all the rest take orders from him and discharge the functions assigned to them by Śiva. Hence it is that when the Purāṇas came into being, they glorified one or the other of the three Gods, Brahma, Viṣṇu or Śiva, and each of them is spoken of in different places as being worshipped by the rest. But it was not the three primary deities alone that were thus meditated upon. Even minor gods, such as Nandi, Kāma, etc., came to be thought of by some worshippers as entitled to such reverence and hence we notice that several special mantras came into existence. These mantras were modelled upon the Gāyatri and so we have innumerable Gāyatris, such as "Tatpuruṣasya vidmahe-mahādevāya dhīmahi—Tanno rudraḥ pracodayāt" in praise of Rudra in the form of Tatpuruṣa and Mahādeva; "Tatpuruṣasya vidmahe vakratuṇḍāya dhīmahi-Tanno dantiḥ pracodayāt" for Vināyaka or Gaṇeśa; Tatpuruṣasya vidmahe cakratuṇḍāya dhīmahi — Tanno nandi pracodayāt for Nandi.

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Similarly there are gāyatris for Saṇmukha, Garuḍa, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Narasimha, Bhāskara (Sun), Agni, etc. All these prayers have been introduced along with many more of a late date, into the fourth chapter of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. The fact that there are such Gāyatris reveals more forcibly than anything else the great prevalence of the bhakti cult. The prime use of the Gāyatri (to whomsoever it may be addressed) is to help the worshipper in meditating upon the god who is invoked in the mantra. For some reason or another, one entertains a feeling of deep veneration towards any one of the gods, and then one attempts to fix one's thoughts always upon that god. Lest one's thoughts should fritter away, one goes on repeating the Gāyatri prayer composed for that god. Thus, when we find, that there is a special Gāyatri in honour of any one of the gods, we can be sure that that god was the special object of worship by one class of people. Hence there ought to have been Nandi bhaktas, Subrahmaṇya bhaktas, Narasimha bhaktas, etc. But all these gods themselves could be broadly grouped under three main divisions, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, and Śākta and so all the bhaktas could be similarly classified as worshippers of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Śakti respectively. The Śaiva Āgamas, Vaiṣṇava Āgamas, and Śākta Āgamas embodied their doctrines and rules of worship.

The Gāyatri mantra would have been helpful only for the fairly advanced classes of bhaktas. But others would still remain who would not be satisfied unless they had some visible tangible object which would remind them of their god, which they could worship by offering incense, flowers, etc. It was for their benefit that

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images were made. It was not at all necessary that the images should be life-like or beautiful. Just as a walking-stick or an umbrella would serve a child as a horse or a motor car for the time being (when the child is inclined to play) the bhakta of the less advanced type would be satisfied with a block of stone or wood and imagine that it was (when he was in a reverential mood) Mahādēva or Subrahmaṇya or Narasimha. To him it would be the remembrancer of the god of his heart, and knowing full well that it was only stone or wood, he would yet lavish all his love upon it just in the same manner in which a lover would cherish the picture of his sweetheart. When this need for some image was manifesting itself, rules came to be framed as to the manner in which images were to be made. The rules are found in the respective Āgamas. The predominant feature of any one deity was represented in the image of that deity; e.g. a spear was usually placed in the hands of Subrahmaṇya because he was a warrior-god who wielded his spear in all his encounters. The sacred Śaṅkha and Cakra would be found in the arms of Viṣṇu and so on. Thus the image of any particular god would invariably indicate his character. Śiva was, and is, represented by what is known as the liṅgam. It becomes therefore necessary to examine what is the character of Śiva that is thus evidenced by Śiva's image—liṅgam.

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# CHAPTER III.

## THE SIVA LIṄGAM.

Much misunderstanding prevails about the Śiva Liṅga. The common belief is that it represents the phallus; but it is doubtful if the ancients had such a conception. There is no conclusive evidence to infer that the worship of the phallus prevailed in India even among the uncivilised tribes. Macdonell, however, lays it down categorically that the cult was in existence in the Vedic period. "A symbol must have been used, as at a later period, in the phallic worship which was known by the occurrence in two passages of the word 'Śiśna Devāḥ'. 'Those who have a phallus for their deity'. Such worship was, however, repugnant to the religious ideas of the Ṛg-Veda; for Indra is besought not to let the Śiśna devāḥ approach the sacrifice,[1] and he is said to have slain the Śiśna dēvāḥ, when he won the treasure of the hundred-gated fort.[2] In the post-Vedic period, the phallus or liṅga became symbolical of Śiva's generative power and its worship is widely diffused even at the present day".[3]

The word Śiśna dēvāḥ is explained by Sāyaṇa as meaning "those who sport with the śiśna, i.e., unchaste men" and he quotes Yāska as his authority.[4] 'Durga, the commentator of the Nirukta, gives the same explanation".[5] Muir is not satisfied with the explanation, and he proceeds to examine other Vedic compound

[1] VII. 21. 5.
[2] X. 99. 3.
[3] *Vedic Mythology*, p. 155.
[4] Muir, IV. p. 409.
[5] Ibid.



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words ending in Dēvāḥ; and, after arguing elaborately for and against Sāyaṇa's meaning, concludes thus:— "However interesting it would be to find a proof of the existence of a phallic worship among the aboriginal tribes contemporary with the Vedic Ṛṣis, it must be confessed that the word Śiśna dēvāḥ does not supply this evidence". In spite of the correct and impartial analysis of the position by Muir, R. G. Bhandarkar says, "Notwithstanding all that is said about the matter, my own belief is that the persons here referred to were really some tribe of the aborigines of the country who worshipped the phallus".[6] But that is only a statement of his own belief. One cannot accept it without further evidence. Beyond these two allusions there is no mention of the worship of the phallus any where in Vedic, Upaniṣadic, or Brāhmaṇic literature. The word 'Liṅga' occurs in some places in the Upaniṣads, but in a different sense, e.g., the cosmic Puruṣa is described as a-liṅga' in Kaṭha VI. 8. The meaning is that he does not have a distinguishing mark. This same description appears in the Śvetāśvatara Upaṇiṣad III. 9. In the period of the Mahābhārata, Mahēśvara or Rudra must have been completely identified with the cosmic Puruṣa by Śiva worshippers. He was regarded as 'the cause of causes'.[7] The meaning of the phrase will become clear from the opening verses of the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad. There 'time' (kāla), 'inherent nature' (sva-bhāva), 'necessity' (niyati), chance 'yadṛcchā', 'the elements (bhūta),' the womb (yoni), 'a male person' (puruṣa), are considered causes.[8] Īśa (Rudra) is considered the cause of these

[6] *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism*, etc., p. 115.
[7] *Mahābhārata*, Anuśāsana Parva, sec. XIV. V. 226 (P. C. Ray's trn.)
[8] Śv. Up. I. 2.

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causes'.[9] (He is identified with the 'one who rules over these causes').[10] Being thus regarded, Īśa becomes necessarily inconceivable. "It is conceived of by him by whom it is not conceived of. He by whom it is conceived of, knows it not. It is not understood by those who say they understand it. It is understood by those who say they understand it not".[11] Not being conceivable Īśa could not be worshipped. Yet the mind will not be satisfied without worship, and so, something representing Mahēśvara or Śiva came to be worshipped. That was the liṅga or the characteristic mark of Śiva. But Śiva was 'a-liṅga, without a mark'. Hence its mark was the mark of 'a-liṅga' or 'indistinguishability', or 'imperceptibility' as a form. Those who conceived of Śiva as the cause of causes or the cosmic Puruṣa, believed that everything else, including Brahmā and Viṣṇu had a form. Śiva alone is formless or in other words 'all-formed'. Being possessed of all forms and having no form of its own, there is nothing in the three worlds, male or female, embodied or disembodied which is not pervaded by Śiva. Every form that is worshipped is the form or 'liṅga' of the all-formed Śiva. Likewise even a form-less thing that is worshipped is the mark, or the liṅga, of the formless Śiva; for Śiva alone is really formless. Hence it is that Upamanyu says 'We have not heard that the liṅga of any other is worshipped by the gods. Declare if thou hast heard, what other being's liṅga except that of Māhēśvara is now worshipped, or has formerly been worshipped by the gods. He whose liṅga, Brahmā and Viṣṇu and thou (Indra), with the deities, continually

[9]Śv. Up. I. 3.
[10]Śv. Up. I. 3.
[11]Kēna II. 3.

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worship, is therefore the most eminent".[12] It was to represent this double idea of the 'all-formed' and 'form-less' that the Śiva liṅga (which is believed wrongly by some to represent the phallus) was chosen, and it became the object of worship. The description of the cosmic Puruṣa, as it appears in the Puruṣa Sūkta hymn[13] and in the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad[14] applies equally to the Śiva liṅga also; e.g., 'The Puruṣa has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. .... It has a hand and foot on every side, on every side an eye and head and face, it has an ear everywhere in the world". The hemispherical top of the Śiva liṅga consists in reality of thousands of heads, each of the size of a point. The sides of the cylindrical figure are equally true representations of the thousands of eyes, hands and faces. The circular bottom is similarly representative of a thousand feet; the semicircular top, resembling the visible horizon, is truly symbolical of the universe which surrounds the earth on all sides.[15] Though the image has thousands of hands, feet and eyes, it still has 'no foot or hand or eye or ear'.[16] Thus the Śiva liṅga is the closest possible approximation to the cosmic Puruṣa with whom Maheśvara was identified by the devotees of Śiva. This explanation is borne out by several passages in the Liṅga Purāṇa, e.g.

"A-liṅgo liṅga mūlaṁ tu avyaktaṁ liṅgaṁ ucyate,
A-liṅgaḥ Śiva ity ukto liṅgam śaivam iti smṛtaṁ".

The supreme Being who has no characteristic marks is the source of characteristic marks. Impercep-

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[12] *M. Bh.* Anuśāsana Parva, *ibid* v. 228.
[13] Muir, IV. 192.
[14] III. 14, 15, 16.
[15] Description of the Cosmic Puruṣa in the Śv. Up. III. 14.
[16] Śv. Up. III. 19.

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tibility is spoken of as the mark (of Śiva). The liṅga (the Śiva liṅga) is remembered as pertaining to Śiva.[17] The meaning of liṅga as the differentiating mark (and not as the sex-mark) is evidenced by a verse in the Liṅga Purāṇa which runs thus:—

"Pradhānam prakṛtiś-ceti yadāhur liṅgam uttamaṁ—
gandha varṇa raśair hīnam śabda-sparśādi-varjitaṁ".

"The foremost liṅgam which is primary and is devoid of smell, colour, taste, hearing, touch, etc., is spoken of as Prakṛti (Nature)".[18] When it is remembered that the cause, whereby the universe is seen as different from the Supreme indivisible being, is Māyā or illusion, and that one should know that Prakṛti is "illusion or Māyā"[19] the meaning of the word 'liṅga' appearing in the above verse will become clear. The word is used as synonymous with Prakṛti, the first thing which differentiated itself, e.g., separated itself from the infinite and indivisible thing known as Śiva to Śaiva devotees. When this initial differentiation was effected, the whole world got to be differentiated also. Necessarily it should have its distinguishing characteristic. That mark of distinction attaching itself to the world is spoken of by the Śaiva devotee as the liṅga—

"Vigrahō jagatām liṅgam, aliṅgādabhavat svayam"; That is, "the image (form) of the world created itself from the indistinguishable (a-liṅga)".[20] Here we have another instance to show that the Śiva worshipper's conception of the liṅga

[17] Liṅga Purāṇa III. 1.
[18] Ibid. III. 2.
[19] Śv. Up. IV. 10.
[20] Linga. Pur. III. 4.

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was something different from that of the phallus. Since both Prakṛti and the universe got their 'liṅga' or characteristic marks of differentiation from Śiva Himself, every object in the universe is spoken of as being marked with the liṅga assigned to it by Maheśvara (who is assisted in this by his consort Umā). The staunch Śaiva devotee Upamanyu is unwilling to regard Viṣṇu, or Brahmā, or Indra, as the Highest, and so speaks sarcastically about them. "Since prajāḥ or created beings bear neither the mark of the lotus (Brahma's), nor of the discus (Viṣṇu's), nor of the thunderbolt (Indra's), but are marked with the male and female organs (the distinguishing marks of human beings)—therefore offspring is derived from Maheśvara".[21] The implication is that none of the three gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra, is capable of conferring upon mortals their characteristic marks. They are themselves only subject creations like human beings. Their own functions and characteristic features have to be determined by Mahēśvara. They are swayed by Prakṛti, and so they are (spoken of by Upamanyu as) the worshippers of the liṅga, which the Prakṛti is said to be (according to the Liṅga Purāna quoted above).

It is in the above manner that Upamanyu's remarks have to be understood; otherwise they would become meaningless. If it is believed that the 'liṅga of Mahādeva' was the phallus of Mahādeva, then it would appear that Upamanyu was of opinion that Mahādeva's form was that of a human being. There is no proof of that. The presumption is in favour of the view that the gods have shapes different from those of human beings just in the same manner in which the

[21] M.Bh. Anuśāsana Parva. 822 c. Muir IV. 192-3.

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shape of man is different from that of a worm or an insect. Again, if the liṅgam is understood to mean the phallus, why should Mahādeva's liṅgam alone be the object of worship? Any god's liṅgam would serve the purpose as well. Further, in the passage appearing in the Mahābhārata, Upamanyu says that all beings, in the three worlds, movable and immovable are marked by Mahādeva's liṅgam. That means that the mountains, rocks, and rivers, fire, wind and lightning, and everything else which cannot be classified as either male or female, have the mark of Mahādeva. The phallic idea will not apply here. Thus it is impossible to understand the liṅgam as meaning the sex-mark. The reason why this wrong notion crept in was that in the Sanskrit language the word 'liṅga' has also the meaning of the male sex-mark. But it is clear that it is a derivative meaning. Since the male organ happens to be the distinguishing mark of the male, the word came to have that meaning. But that fact should not be allowed to mislead us in understanding the meaning of the Śiva liṅga.

In this connection it becomes necessary to take account of some opinions expressed by Mr. K. R. Subramanian. He says that "phallic worship was the primitive form of Śiva worship and un-Brahmanical and un-Vedic in origin with its roots in the neo-lithic times".[22] Again he holds that liṅga is the symbol of the ancestor in ancestry worship.[23] He arrives at these conclusions after an elaborate process of reasoning for

[22] In his Śankara Pārvati Prize thesis, submitted to the Madras University in 1927 and published as a supplement to the *Madras University Journal*, Volume I, Part II.

[23] Ibid 25.

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establishing first that the Nāgas were phallic worshippers,[24] and secondly that the phallic cult "was closely connected with ancestor-worship and the snake-cult".[25]

We may grant that the Nāgas might have been worshippers of Śiva. For, they form one group of the subjects of Śiva, who had to acknowledge Gaṇapati or Śiva's son as their immediate overlord. It is also just possible that there were in other lands some who were worshippers of the phallus. But it is wrong to confound the phallic cult with Śiva worship because the phallus had nothing to do with Śiva liṅgam. The fact that we find the serpent enveloping the Śivaliṅga installed in different places, is proof enough, perhaps, to show that those who reverenced the Nāgas as their ancestors were also at the same time, reverencing their own and their ancestors' god, Śiva. Thus there is, absolutely no need for confusing either phallic worship with Śiva Linga worship, or with ancestor worship.

Mr. K. R. Subramanian has incidentally taken notice of a story in the *Rājātaraṅgiṇi* about Śiva worshipping a liṅga at the time of his marriage.[26] Now, what is the inference that must be made from this? Does it mean that Śiva was like other degenerate people a worshipper of the phallus on the wrong assumption that the Śiva liṅgam is nothing more than the phallus? Such an interpretation would be absurd, and the only rational interpretation of the story must be that on the occasion of his marriage, even Śiva felt that he was inferior in status and strength to the cosmic Puruṣa symbolised by the liṅga. In other words, this story gives support to the conclusion we have already arrived

[24] Ibid 20.
[25] Ibid 23.
[26] Ibid 20.

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at, that the liṅga is only the outward symbol of the formless being—the ultimate ruler of the Universe.

In the same place, Mr. Subramanian alludes to the Rāmāyaṇa story of the Uttarakāṇḍa about Rāvaṇa always carrying a golden linga with him. He says:—"Rāvaṇa always carried with him a golden liṅga, but at the same time fought with Śaṅkara in Kailāsa".[27] Evidently Mr. Subramanian could not find out a reason for this apparently inexplicable conduct of Rāvaṇa. But the matter is quite simple. It is certain that Rāvaṇa was a worshipper of the cosmic Puruṣa which, as is seen from the Upaniṣads has to be given a higher place than that given to Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra. That was why he was having the golden liṅga always with him. He had also a sort of feeling that because he was a worshipper of the highest, he could with impunity slight Rudra or Śiva who, in his opinion, was only one of the Trinity. But Rudra took this occasion to show Rāvaṇa that he was mistaken, and that in reality Rudra was none other than the cosmic Puruṣa Himself. I shall have occasion to show in the next chapter that legends like this must have been coined by the devout worshippers of Śiva with the intention of giving full expression to their deep-rooted conviction that Śiva alone was the god of all gods, superior in every respect to the other gods and identical with the highest of all gods.

Mr. Subramanian takes notice of the peculiar shape of the liṅga at Guḍimallam, Kaḷattūr and Kuḍumiyāmalai, which has led Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao to conclude that the liṅga was only the phallus.[28] But

[27] Ibid 20.
[28] *Ibid* 28 and T. A. Gōpinātha Rao; *Hindu Iconography* II. i. 55 to 57.



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when we remember that the almost innumerable Śiva liṅgas of our land are all of a common shape having not even the slightest resemblance to the phallus, a few exceptional ones in the three places above mentioned need not at all be taken seriously to affect our general conclusion. Let it be conceded also that the few exceptions may really belong to a phallic tribe; this, however, has no bearing on the nature of Śiva and Śaivism.

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# CHAPTER IV.

## TWO NOTEWORTHY ŚAIVA LEGENDS.

We have noticed before that the worship of Śiva must have been adopted by at least a section of the people even from the time of the Atharva Veda. The acceptance of Śiva as a personal god must have had the natural consequence of making some regard Śiva as the highest of all gods, attributing to Him qualities which would be denied to other gods. It was such an attitude of mind that was responsible for the growth of a number of legends about Śiva, and also Viṣṇu, which were later on included in the Epics and the Purāṇas. Though these are only legends in which fact is bound to be mixed up with fiction, they cannot be rejected as entirely valueless. On the other hand, they happen to be most valuable, especially when there is no other source of information available, to show the trend of popular opinion. We shall take up for investigation two of them, each of which throws a flood of light upon the history of Śaivism in the time of the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads.

### *ŚIVA'S DESTRUCTION OF THE TRIPLE CASTLE OF THE ASURAS.*

The story occurs in the Karṇa Parva of the *Mahābhārata* Sections 33-35, Verses 1391 ff.[1] Briefly the account is as follows:—

In ancient times there was a war between the gods and the Asuras in which the latter were overthrown.

[1]Muir. IV. 223 ff.

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The three sons of the Asura Tāraka wanted to have their revenge and so performed austerities and procured a boon from Brahmā that they were not to be vanquished by any one except somebody who was able to destroy their three castles by a single arrow. They constructed three castles, one of gold in heaven, the second of silver in air and the third of iron on earth, and began oppressing Devas and Ṛṣis, whereupon all the gods complained about them to Brahmā. He replied that none but Mahādeva "by whom the universe is pervaded, who *through particular austerities,* knows the 'Yoga" and the 'Sāṅkhya' of the Ātman", could accomplish the task. So all went to him and providing him with a chariot out of all forms of the universe and supplying him with a bow and arrow, the constituent parts of which were Viṣṇu, Soma and Agni, persuaded Mahādeva to discharge the arrow against the three castles. Brahmā became the charioteer, and Mahādeva hurled the arrow against the triple-castle which fell to the ground. Then all the gods praised Mahādeva and took their departure.

This account (as it appears in the Mahābhārata) is indicative of the fact that Viṣṇu is not given any prominence. On the other hand, Brahmā is, at least formally, acknowledged to be superior to Mahādeva, for the latter says one greater than himself should be made his charioteer (mattaḥ śrēṣṭhataro hi yaḥ). But Brahmā himself states, in the previous part of the story, that he had obtained the rank of Prajāpati from Mahādeva.[2] So it is clear that Viṣṇu occupied a position of inferiority, being ranked with the other gods, Indra, Soma, Agni, etc., and the two only Supreme

[2]Muir, IV. 224.

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gods were Brahmā and Mahādeva, each of whom was willing to acknowledge the other as greater than himself. Again in the story the reason why Mahādeva was given that name is also stated. "Mahādeva said that he himself could not destroy them (the Asuras) as they were strong, but that, with the aid of half of his strength they, (the gods) themselves, would be able to conquer their enemies. They answered that they could not sustain half his strength, but proposed that he should undertake the work, aided by half their strength. To this Mahādeva consented, and became stronger than all the gods (conjointly), and was thenceforward called Mahādeva or the great god". If we examine the real meaning of the foregoing explanation, it will be clear that Mahādeva was given that name because his power was greater than that of all the gods. Now, the power of Mahādeva consisted in his austerities, as described in the early part of the story. The power of the Devas or the gods consisted in their ability to give mortals what they asked for. This power was apparently caused by the sacrifices they performed (e.g., Indra was known as 'Śata-kratu' or the performer of a hundred sacrifices). So, in instituting a comparison between the power (the word in the text is 'tejas', v. 1459) that might be gained through austerity and that through sacrifices, the gods themselves acknowledged the greater value of austerity or tapas. That was why they called themselves Devās, but applied the name of the great Dēva to Mahādeva. This great god could not have been different from Rudra, for though there is a mention of all the other gods, Rudra is not mentioned at all. Obviously then, Mahādeva was identified with Rudra. If that were so,

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this incident of the destruction of the three castles must have occurred (actually or in imagination) after the period when Rudra got his name Mahādeva. This name occurs in chapter VI of Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa but not in the Śatarudrīya. Hence this legend arose after the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa came to be composed. The absence of any rivalry between Viṣṇu and Mahādeva, and the evident friendly relations between Brahmā and Mahādeva, may also be taken to be evidence of the fact that bhaktas had not begun to show any sectarian tendencies. Yet it was quite likely that, at least after the open acknowledgment by the gods themselves of the greatness of Mahādeva whose sole claim to greatness seemed to consist in his austerities, (and what his austerities led to, is a knowledge of the 'Yoga' and Sāṅkhya of the Ātman), there was much greater temptation than before for Śiva bhaktas to stick to their path and even to regard themselves superior to those who followed the path of Vedic ceremonials and rituals. We may well believe that it was in this age that great value was attached to the Vrātya hymn as it appears in the Atharva Veda. The large majority of the people, who found it difficult because of ignorance and of poverty to perform Vedic sacrifices, were now given a good opportunity to join the ranks of Śaiva ascetics, and thus gain respectability in the eyes of the community. It was only natural that under such circumstances, the number of Śaiva devotees must have been steadily on the increase, much to the chagrin and disappointment of the orthodox believers of the Vedas. With the increase in the number of Śaiva devotees, there must also have been a steady decline in their morals and general conduct, since the vast majority of them were

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ignorant and hence were pretenders. Hence, there came about a natural reaction in favour of the Vedic path and against the new phase of Śaivism. Men of righteous conduct were appalled by the grossly vulgar and revolting life led by these so-called ascetics, and in their condemnation of these low men, they began to condemn Śiva also as the author of their contemptible modes of life. They now turned to Viṣṇu as the real saviour and highest god. It is this period of the history of early Śaivism that is reflected in the legend about Dakṣa's sacrifice.

### *DAKṢA'S SACRIFICE.*

This story appears in many places (including the Rāmāyaṇa)[3] and the accounts vary in some particulars. But the main facts are the same. According to the version in the Śānti Parva of the Mahābhārata,[4] Dakṣa begins a sacrifice at Gaṅgādvāra in the Himālayas, which is attended by all the gods, including Brahmā and Indra; but Rudra is not invited. Dadhīci, a devotee of Maheśvara, is incensed at the insult thus offered to Śiva, and foretells calamity on that account. Dakṣa replies 'We have many Rudras, armed with tridents and wearing spirally-braided hair, who occupy eleven places—I know not Maheśvara'. Dadhīci answers 'This is a pre-concerted plan of all the gods that Mahādeva has not been invited. Since I perceive Śaṅkara, and no other deity, to be supreme, therefore this sacrifice of Dakṣa shall not be prosperous'. Dakṣa said:—'I offer to the lord of sacrifice, (Viṣṇu) in a golden vessel, this entire oblation purified by rites and

[3] I. 66.—7 ff.
[4] VV. 10. 272 ff. Muir IV. 374 ff.

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by texts, the share of the incomparable Viṣṇu. He is the lord, the all-pervading god of the sacrificial fire'. This discourse must have been known to Umā, the consort of Śiva, though they were not on the scene of sacrifice, and the Devi feels embittered that her husband is not honoured. Then Śiva pacifies her thus:—"Thou knowest me not......... I know......; but the wicked, devoid of reflection, know not; and the three worlds, including Indra and the gods are to-day together bewildered..... Worshippers praise me at the sacrifice ......". The Dēvi is not satisfied. She taunts him thus:—"Every common man praises and magnifies himself in an assembly of women". Then Mahādeva shows his power by creating the dreadful Vīrabhadra (with his hosts) who goes and destroys Dakṣa's sacrifice. Dakṣa then begins to sing the praise of Mahādeva who was thus pacified, and willing to allow Dakṣa to proceed with the sacrifice.

In this story, the opposition between the Viṣṇu Bhaktas, of whom Dakṣa was apparently one, (for he glorifies Viṣṇu as the lord of all), and the Śiva bhaktas like Dadhīci is clearly evidenced. But it is when we examine the account of the same incident in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa[5] that the rivalry between these two schools becomes more clearly expressed. There we also notice that the Śaivas were regarded as impure and '*avaidic*', or heterodox by the Vaiṣṇavas. There it is stated that all the gods and Ṛṣis were assembled together at a sacrifice celebrated by the Prajāpatis (including Dakṣa). When Dakṣa came in, all present showed their respect to him by rising from their seats, but Brahmā and Mahādeva did not. Dakṣa was willing to

[5] IV. Chapters 2—7.

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pay his respects to Brahmā, but he was offended with what he regarded as the insolence of Śiva. Then he spoke in anger:—"Hear me, ye Brahman Ṛṣis, with the gods and Agnis, while I, neither from ignorance nor from passion, describe what is the practice of virtuous persons. But this shameless being (Śiva) detracts from the reputation of the guardians of the world (Prajāpati)—he, by whom, stubborn as he is, the course pursued by the good is transgressed. He assumed the position of my disciple, in as much as, like a virtuous person, in the face of the Brahmans and of fire, he took the hand of my daughter.... This monkey-eyed (god) after having taken the hand of (my) fawn-eyed (daughter), has not even by word shown suitable respect to me whom he ought to have risen and saluted. Though unwilling, I yet gave my daughter to this *impure and proud abolisher of rites and demolisher of barriers, like the word of the Veda to a Śūdra*. He roams about in dreadful cemeteries, attended by hosts of ghosts and spirits, like a mad man, naked, with dishevelled hair, laughing, weeping, bathed in the ashes of funeral piles, wearing a garland of dead men's skulls, and ornaments of human bones, pretending to be Śiva (auspicious), but in reality Aśiva (inauspicious), insane, beloved by the insane, the lord of Pramathas and Bhūtas, beings whose nature is essentially darkness. To this wicked-hearted lord of the infuriate, whose purity has perished, I have, alas, given my virtuous daughter, at the instigation of Brahmā". He follows up this speech by a curse, "Let this Bhava (Śiva) lowest of the gods, never, at the worship of the gods, receive any portion along with the gods, Indra, Upēndra (Viṣṇu) and others." Then he departed. This action roused the fury of Nandīśvara, the chief

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follower of Śiva. He cursed in return:—"May the ignorant being who, from regard to this mortal (Dakṣa), and considering (Śiva) as distinct (from the supreme spirit), hates the deity who does not return hatred, be averse to truth. Devoted to domestic life, in which frauds are prevalent, let him from a desire of vulgar passions, practise the round of ceremonies, with an understanding degraded by Vedic prescriptions. Forgetting the nature of the soul, with a mind which contemplates other things, let Dakṣa, brutal, be excessively devoted to women, and have speedily the face of a goat. Let this stupid being, who has a conceit of knowledge, and all those who follow this contemner of Śarva (Śiva), continue to exist in this world in ceremonial ignorance. Let the enemies of Hara (Śiva), whose minds are disturbed by the strong spirituous odour and the excitement of the flowery words of the Veda, become deluded. Let those Brahmans, eating all sorts of food, professing knowledge and practising austerities and ceremonies (merely) for subsistence, delighting in riches and in corporeal and sensual enjoyments, wander about as beggars". This curse rouses the anger of Bhṛgu who delivers in his turn the following curse:—"Let those who practise the rites of Bhava and all their followers be heretics and opponents of the true scriptures. Having lost their purity, deluded in understanding, wearing matted hair, and ashes and bones, let them undergo the initiation of Śiva, in which spirituous liquor is the deity. Since ye revile the Veda (Brahma) and the Brāhmaṇas, the barriers by which men are restrained, ye have embraced heresy. For this (Veda) is the auspicious (Śiva) eternal path of the virtuous, follow the heresy in which your god is the king of the goblins". This was a curse by a Brahman,

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which could not be avoided, and so, according to the story, Śiva went away with his followers and 'Dakṣa and the other Prajāpatis celebrated for a thousand years the sacrifice in which Viṣṇu was the object of adoration'.[6] It was this humiliation and disgrace of Śiva that apparently made Dakṣa neglect Śiva when he invited all the gods to the sacrifice he individually celebrated. The story of the sacrifice, as narrated here, differs from the Mahābhārata account, and since this account throws some light upon the development of Śaivism in that remote period, it may be taken notice of. Satī (Umā) requests her husband to permit her to go to the sacrifice performed by Dakṣa. Śiva warns her that she would be insulted. In spite of this warning she goes and is slighted by her father. Remonstrating in vain with Dakṣa to change his attitude towards Śiva, she 'gives up the ghost'. Śiva's followers, who had accompanied Satī, were prevented by a mantra of Bhṛgu from destroying the sacrifice. They returned to narrate the tale to Śiva who, in his wrath, created out of a lock of his hair a terrible spirit who led Śiva's followers to the scene of sacrifice and destroyed it. The story is that later Śiva himself went to the place, 'plucked out the beard of Bhṛgu', who was pouring oblations into the fire, 'tore out the eyes of Bhaga', and knocked out the teeth of Puṣān', for all these had been partisans of Dakṣa. Dakṣa's head was cut off, etc. etc.

The foregoing account is valuable as showing the opinions held by the Viṣṇu worshippers like Dakṣa, Bhṛgu and others about Śiva and his worshippers, and also the latter's opinions about the former. The words of reproach uttered by Dakṣa bring out the prominent

[6]Muir. IV. 382.

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characteristics of Śiva and his worshippers at that time. The phrase 'impure and proud abolisher of rites and demolisher of barriers' is significant. This clearly shows that the devotees of Śiva were recruited from all castes and that they did not observe the Brahmanical conventions in their mode of life. 'Roaming about in cemeteries' indicates the characteristic practice of some Śaivas. It is impossible to find out how this practice came into vogue, or when. It might be that the Śaiva devotees betook themselves to the cemeteries for developing such qualities as courage and vairāgya, and for gaining knowledge. Śaiva devotees might have chosen those places for concentrating their thoughts upon the impermanence of the visible world. There is no doubt that one is filled with the thought of the transitory nature of everything in the world when one looks at a corpse burning. To familiarise oneself with the idea of death so as to consider it as but an ordinary and normal concomitant of life, visits to cremation grounds are indeed helpful. A Śaiva devotee regarded death as only the liberation from earthly bondage, and Śiva was, according to him, the god who loosened all bonds. He was Paśupati whose main task consisted in removing fetters, or pāśam, including the 'mortal coil' and conferring upon the paśu, the bound soul, the patitva or lordliness, release from bondage. Hence, Paśupati could best be contemplated upon when the soul was released from the body in the cremation ground, and when the body also of the corpse was transformed into the five elements, (the pañca bhūtas). The bhūtas are (comparatively) immortal, and hence the Śaiva could, by looking at a burning corpse, conceive of how the mortal could gain immortality. Some such explanation ought to be given to the practice of 'roam-

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ing about cemeteries' and to the statement that Śiva was always dwelling in Rudra Bhūmi or the burning ghat, and that he wore a garland of skulls, etc.

The reference to Śiva dancing naked like a mad man with hair dishevelled, etc., is also equally intelligible since it often happens that people who enter into a state of religious ecstasy do the same thing even to-day. They are absolutely unconscious (unless they are hoaxes) of their surroundings and of what they are doing. It is quite possible that they are mad for the time being. At any rate, they are not sober in the ordinary sense of the term. An intense feeling of joy or sorrow is found to produce that effect. Probably a belief in the god-possession may have the very same result. The Śaiva devotees (like the other devotees) were hankering after such a state of god-possession. Quite naturally, therefore, their ideal of their god was that of one who enjoyed this 'bliss' (that is how Bhaktas regard it) always.

Such a condition of frenzy or madness would not have been acceptable to all. Hence it was that Dakṣa and others condemned it. But they were in their turn disliked by the Śaiva devotees, like Nandi, who were disgusted with the ignorance revealed by the observers of Vedic rituals. The admirers of Śiva found fault with them for their conceit and stupidity, for the importance they attached to the sound of the Vedic hymns ('the flowery words of the Veda') and for their neglect of true wisdom, the knowledge of the nature of the soul. In the curse pronounced by Nandi, one important point stands revealed. He accuses the Brahmans of 'eating all sorts of food'. It clearly shows that the Śaivas had, from the very beginning, strict

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regulations in the matter of their food. It is well known that the Brahmans ate all kinds of food, as sacrificers. The revolt against the Vedic sacrifices which was set up by Śiva devotees was therefore partly due to the fact that they were disgusted with the sight of the slaughter of several animals in such sacrifices as the Rājasūya, Vājapēya, etc. If that were so, the Brahman of the present day, probably owes his exclusively vegetarian diet to the reform initiated in this direction by the early Śiva devotees.

The curse uttered by Bhṛgu, the consequent departure of Śiva and his followers, and the thousand years' sacrifice conducted by the Prajāpatis, including Dakṣa, throw light upon an unillumined portion of the history of Śaivism. It has been noticed above that in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa there is distinct mention of Rudra being conceived of as an impure deity, necessitating the purification (by water) of the person who offered oblations to Rudra before the sacrificer could proceed with the other sacrifices. This 'outcasting' of Rudra by the Prajāpatis, after Bhṛgu's curse, was the reason why the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa speaks in that strain about Rudra. Hence the thousand years and more during which the Prajāpatis performed the sacrifice, and also the period of time when Dakṣa celebrated his sacrifice to which Rudra was not invited, must have been the time when the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa had sway. That book deals entirely with sacrifices which were hated by the Śaiva devotees from the earliest days. Since Nandi is spoken of as cursing Dakṣa, at the commencement of the sacrifice by the Prajāpatis, it is clear that the Śiva cult was in vogue even before the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, but that it was eclipsed by the Vedic

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rituals which held sway. All that time Śiva himself was banished from the thoughts of the orthodox as a Saviour god and he was regarded as the highest among the gods only by the Śiva worshippers who were naturally considered heterodox by the Vedic Brāhmaṇas. During this long period of time, the Śiva Āgamas must have been composed, so that the Śaivas might have for themselves something as sacred as the Vedas of the orthodox, and also so that they might have well-established rules and regulations relating to their order. Necessarily, much importance was attached to purity of food and to sincerity of devotion, and none at all to ceremonies involving the recital of mantras and the offering of oblations. The orthodox adherents of the Vedic ritual discounted the value of these sectarian writings and made it a point to omit all allusion to them in their scriptures. This period of submergence (if it can be called such) of the Śiva cult terminated with the destruction of Dakṣa by Śiva, as narrated above. The victory thus gained was a victory of Śaivism over Vedic rituals, a triumph of rational heterodoxy over blind orthodoxy. From that time onwards Śaivism became accepted by the orthodox also, in evidence of which we notice the author of the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad assigning the highest place to Rudra. But it is certain that Śaivism must have by now got purged of its unnatural excrescences such as wine-drinking, mad dances, etc. [Hence it is that we find, in the Mahābhārata, a glowing account of Śiva and his sacred abode in Kailās. (Anuśāsana Parva).

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# CHAPTER V.

## SAIVISM AS REFLECTED IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA.

Examining the Mahābhārata, one gets evidence enough to arrive at the conclusion that in the epic age Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism had taken deep root in the soil as bhakti cults, each with its own special votaries. At the same time, there were in the land those who were believers in the old Vedic path of Karma or sacrifices. They were also those who were convinced that Śiva and Viṣṇu were in truth only two different names for the same Supreme Being, and that it was folly to glorify the one at the expense of the other. All these sections of the community did everything in their power to win adherents to their cause, and that is why we have in the Mahābhārata several stories indirectly expressing their different convictions. For instance we read in one story, evidently coined by a staunch Śaiva devotee, the following:—

"This (Mahādeva) is the glorious god, the beginning of all existences, undecaying, who knows the formation of all principles, who is Pradhāna and Puruṣa; who, the lord, created from his right side Brahmā, the originator of the worlds, and from his left side Viṣṇu, for the preservation of the universe; and when the end of the age (Yuga) had arrived, the mighty lord created Rudra etc."[1] This shows that the Śiva bhaktas were not satisfied with the Vedas, or even the Upaniṣads, and therefore could not either believe in the

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[1] M. Bh. Anuśāsana Parva VV. 839 ff.

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greatness of the Vedic deities including Rudra, or grow enthusiastic about the abstract Brahman of the Upaniṣads. This feeling of dissatisfaction with Brahman had already manifested itself in the period of the Śvētāśvatara Upaniṣad for the author of that Upaniṣad identified the Brahman extolled in all the Upaniṣads with the god of his devotion. This tendency led, in course of time, to a lowering of the position of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra.

The same thing was done by the Viṣṇu Bhaktas who identified Nārāyaṇa with the Highest, and made every deity subordinate to him; e.g. the following passages occur in the Vana Parva of the Mahābhārata.[2] "At the end of the mundane period (Yuga), thou, O, Madhusūdana, vexer of thy foes, having caused all created things to collapse, and by thyself made them subject to thyself, wast the world. At the commencement of the Yuga, O Vārṣṇēya, Brahmā, the chief of things movable and immovable, who (is) all this world, sprang from the lotus issuing from thy navel. Two horrible Dānavas, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, were ready to slay him. From the forehead of Hari, who became incensed when he saw their transgression, was produced the three-eyed Śambhu (Mahādeva) wielding the trident. ....Thus even those two lords of the gods (Brahmā and Mahādeva) are sprung from thy (Kṛṣṇa's) body, and they execute thy commands," and so on.

This passage shows how sectarianism was showing itself among the rival bhaktas. But the subordination of Rudra to Mahādeva is significant. That marks the stage when the bhaktas attached all importance to their

[2] VV. 496 ff. (Muir 229 ff).



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own special deities (Iṣṭa Devatas), and were in a mood to lower proportionately the value of the Vedic gods including Rudra. But all those who believed in the relative greatness of their own special deity would not have been in a position to understand the real meaning of all the philosophical doctrines about the 'cause of causes'. The common people must be believed to have been innocent of them, though their attachment to their god was none the less intense or sincere. Their conception of Śiva or Nārāyaṇa was that of some unknowable being who ruled over the universe, and was himself subject to none. Each was vehement in the advocacy of his chosen deity, and this led to disputes among the different classes of bhaktas. This is reflected in a story narrated in the Rāmāyaṇa.[3] 'The Gods then all made a request to Brahmā, desiring to find out the strength and weakness of Śitikaṇṭha (Mahādeva) and Viṣṇu. Brahmā, most excellent of the true, learning the purpose of the gods, created enmity between the two. In this state of enmity, a great and terrible fight ensued between Śitikaṇṭha and Viṣṇu, each of whom was eager to conquer the other. Śiva's bow of dreadful power was then relaxed, and the three-eyed Mahādeva was arrested by a muttering. These two eminent deities, being entreated by the assembled gods, ṛṣis and cāraṇas, then became pacified. Seeing that the bow of Śiva had been relaxed by the prowess of Viṣṇu, the gods and ṛṣis esteemed Viṣṇu to be superior. Then the illustrious Rudra, incensed, gave the bow and arrows into the hand of the royal ṛṣi Devarāta (who dwelt) among the Videhas....... Viṣṇu gave (his

[3] Prof. Lassen's version quoted in Muir IV, p. 176 ff.

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bow) this excellent deposit to Ṛcīka, the descendant of Bhṛgu". In fact the exclusive attachment towards one god was sometimes carried to an absurd extreme.[4]

If the votaries of Śiva and Viṣṇu were so intolerant of one another, there were many who felt that this feeling of exclusiveness was unjustifiable. They felt that each was entitled to importance. It was these people who indirectly pleaded for toleration among the worshippers. For that purpose, they introduced stories identifying Śiva and Viṣṇu;—e.g. there is the following account in the Śānti Parva :[5]—When Rudra and Nārāyaṇa had become engaged in battle; all the worlds were intensely distressed. The four-faced Brahmā....addressed these words to Rudra 'let the (the welfare of the) worlds be (consulted); put down thy weapons, lord of all, from goodwill to the universe, and so on.' Being so addressed by Brahmā, Rudra, abandoning the fire of anger, then propitiated the god Nārāyaṇa, the lord; and the god sought as his refuge the primeval, most excellent, boon-bestowing lord..... Hari......addressed the god Īśāna: 'He who knows thee, knows me; he who loves thee, loves me. There is no distinction between us; do not thou entertain any other idea. From this day forward let this 'Śrīvatsa of mine be the mark of the trident and thou shalt be the Śrīkaṇṭha marked upon my hand.' Again another method was tried. It was evidently the custom among the Śiva as well as Viṣṇu worshippers to utter, as long as possible, the names of their special gods. To satisfy this desire, several sets of thousand names or Sahasranāmas were composed. Those who made such strings

[4]See the curious story of Durvāsas, a Śiva bhakta and Rukmiṇī in M. Bh. Anuśāsana parva referred to in Muir IV. 196.

[5]VV. 13278 ff. Muir IV, p. 241.

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of names had the opportunity of effecting thereby some sort of reconciliation between the rival worshippers; for they introduced the name of Śiva in the list of names applied to Viṣṇu and vice versa; e.g. M. Bh. Anuśāsana-parva has the Viṣṇu Sahasranāma stōtra where Śiva's names of Śarva, Sarva, Śiva, Sthāṇu, Īśāna and Rudra are applied to Viṣṇu. In spite of all these devices, the worshippers evidenced their exclusive spirit in their bhakti. To effect the same object of making people regard both the gods as equally great, the trick of making Viṣṇu speak highly of Śiva and vice versa was also tried. Thus the Anuśāsana Parva narrates the story of how Mahādēva, in response to a request of the Ṛṣis, speaks to them of the greatness of Viṣṇu.[6] "Superior even to Pitāmaha (Brahmā) is Hari, the eternal Puruṣa......Brahmā is sprung from his belly and I (Mahādēva) from his head. He is omniscient, intimately united (with all things), omnipresent, facing in every direction, the supreme spirit, Hṛṣīkēśa, all-pervading, the mighty lord. There is no being superior to him in the three worlds". Likewise the same Anuśāsana Parva has Kṛṣṇa's narration to Yudhiṣṭhira of the greatness of Mahādeva. He says:—There is nothing, O, King, which exists superior to Mahādeva; for he is the most excellent of beings in all these three worlds. And nothing can stand before this great deity; for there is no being like him in the three worlds."[7]

These endeavours to introduce a compromise had their effect upon the majority but the intolerant sections of the people were not influenced. Hence it is that the

[6] VV. 6806 ff.
[7] VV. 7422 ff.

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ordinary people continued to believe in Vedic rituals, in the Upaniṣadic doctrines and the Purāṇic stories, but the ardent Śiva bhaktas accepted only those portions of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas which extolled the greatness of Śiva in his different personalities; so too the Vaiṣṇavas placed their faith only in the Vaiṣṇava portion of religious literature.

If we now examine the account, given by Kṛṣṇa, of Śiva as seen in the abode of Kailās, we can get an idea of the notions of Śaivism, as current in the epic age. According to the account in the Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma tells Yudhiṣṭhira:—"It is this Lord Kṛṣṇa that is capable of narrating in its entirety the qualities and the true nature of Śiva". Then at the request of Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa narrates as follows:—'It is impossible to comprehend correctly the ways of Īśvara. How is it possible to know by names alone Him who is the support of Maharṣis, and whose beginning and end were not known to the penetrating vision of Indra and other gods? I shall tell you some of the features of Him who slew the Asuras and who is honoured by austerities...... In ancient days I saw the real form of Śiva through my Yogic power...... Garuḍa conveyed me to the proximity of the Himālayas where I gave him leave to depart. I saw wonderful things in that mountain. I saw the beautiful Āśrama of Muni Upamanyu (son of Vyāghrapāda), the spot best fitted for penance, worshipped by Devas and Gandharvas, and pervaded by the lustre of Brahmā. (Here follows a description of the different trees, fruits, birds and beasts found in that place). The air was filled with the fragrance of sweetly scented flowers, and I heard the music of murmuring mountain rills, the

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warblings of singing birds, the celestial songs of Kinnaras, and the sweet tones of Munis who chanted the Sāma hymns. That place is incapable of being even imagined by others. It shines with lakes and valleys, and is ever adorned with the river Gaṅgā which purifies both the inside and outside of every one. It is honoured with the presence of Mahātmas famed for their *Dharma* and lustrous like fire. Everywhere in that sacred region, there are Yogis whose food is milk, vapour, smoke, water, and air and who are ever devoted to their bath, japa and dhyāna. I saw several Ṛṣis who held fast to diverse forms of penance; some ate grass like the deer and cows; some used pebbles to remove the chaff from the grain, some had no other implements than their teeth to do this, some drank the moon-light and foam, some lived upon the banyan seeds, some slept upon water and some had only barks and skins for their clothing...... Because of their yogic powers, they were playing with snakes and mongooses, tigers and stags. As I was entering into that lovely Āśrama, I beheld a young Brāhman clad in bark, his hair twisted like a braid and his form luminous like Agni because of his penance. He was surrounded by many attendant Śiṣyas. He welcomed me...... and I made enquiries about the welfare of birds....... He said "......Mahādeva, with Umā, is playing here. In other times, Devas and hosts of Ṛṣis obtained their high desires here by worshipping Śaṅkara through penance, vow of chastity, truth and self-restraint. That Śiva whom you seek and who is unthinkable, and is the abode of glory and austerity, is here with the Devi, increasing good and decreasing evil. Hiraṇyakaśipu, who was strong enough to shake the mountain Meru, obtained from Śiva here, the power of ruling over all the Devas

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for ten crores of years. His famous son Damana obtained a boon from Mahādeva and fought with Indra for ten crores of years. The cakra (discus) given you by Śiva after slaying the proud Asura who could pass through waters, was made by him in the old days, and, though shining like fire, is invisible and invincible. It was in ancient times given the name Sudarśana by Śiva and is still known by that name. That discus was shattered when hurled against the Asura Gṛha by you. Nor had Indra's thunderbolt any effect upon him.... After the Devas obtained boons from Śiva, they massacred Asuras in large number. Śiva conferred upon the Asura Vidyutprabha the boon which enabled him to be the lord of the three worlds for a hundred thousand years. He also ordered him to be Śiva's servant always. He gave him a crore of children, and Kuśadvīpa as his kingdom. ....The celebrated Ṛṣi Yāgñavalkya won renown by worshipping Mahādeva. So too Vedavyāsa, son of Parāśara. The Vālakhilyas who were enraged by the insult offered to them by Indra worshipped Mahādeva, and obtained the power of creating Garuḍa who could bring *Amṛta.* Once owing to the wrath of Śiva all the water in the world got dried up. Then water had to be created by obtaining the mercy of Śiva through the performance of the Sapta Kāpāla sacrifice. Sage Atri's wife got through the grace of Śiva the three sons, Dattātrēya, Durvāsa and the moon ........Śākalya of the sharp intellect performed the sacrifice of the mind for nine hundred years and Śiva blessed him saying, 'Child you will become a great author. Your undying fame will be heard in the three worlds. Your family will be adorned by Maharṣis and will not perish. You will have a son who will be renowned among Brahmans and will make sūtras'.

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Savarṇi was a celebrated Ṛṣi of the Kṛta age. He performed authorities before him and told him that he would become a great author and would remain without age or death. By worshipping, in Kāśi, the wind-clad Śiva who wore ashes on his forehead, Indra obtained the lordship of heaven''. Upamanyu goes on thus to mention others who gained several other things by the worship of Śiva, e.g. Nārada, Bāṇāsura, Lavaṇāsura, Rāvaṇa. 'Manmatha's pride was humbled and Yama was consumed.' He then states how he himself was taught about Mahādeva by his mother. The description of the god as he appeared to him then follows. It is a very long account, but it is just this figure that has remained as the ideal of all Śiva worshippers during all the centuries. The Tēvāram hymners who had god-vision, according to their own accounts, praise Śiva in just that form; it is again the form in which images of Śiva are made for worship in the temples. Hence, a brief account of the god has to be given. Śiva and Umā (his consort) appear seated on a white bull with bushy black hair in its tail, with smooth, golden-hued horns, whose sharp, red tips pierce the earth below, and with beautiful ears, nose, eyes and hoofs. Śiva wears the jaṭā and a crown, is decked with snakes and other ornaments, and holds the trident and other weapons. He has the colour of a flame, is three-eyed, blue-necked, and eighteen-armed. He is clad in pure white, has white garlands, is smeared all over with white (ashes), has a white banner, wears the white sacred thread, and is adorned with the crescent on his crown. Brahmā is seated on the right, Nārāyaṇa on the left, Subrahmaṇya (on the peacock) by the side of Umā. Nandi stands motionless by his side with his trident resting on the ground. The Manus (Svāyambuva

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and the rest), the Ṛṣis (Bhṛgu and others), the Devas (Indra, etc.), all the hosts of Bhūtas surround him and sing his praises. Brahmā chants the Rathantara, worshipping *the great liṅga which has the shape of the world and in the middle of which there is* the great Śiva. Nārāyaṇa sings the Jyēṣṭha Sāma and Indra the Śatarudrīya. In the sky there are ten thousand suns and moons.

Later on, the Mahābhārata relates how Upamanyu accepted Kṛṣṇa as his pupil by giving him the Dīkṣā (or initiation). Kṛṣṇa says,:—"On the 8th day, I was initiated by that Brāhman according to the Śāstras. Having shaved my entire head, anointing myself with ghee, and taking the staff and kuśa grass in my arms, I dressed myself in bark fastened with the *mekhalā* (the waist string)." Kṛṣṇa then performs penance and has a sight of Mahādeva. In the praise that Kṛṣṇa utters in honour of Mahādeva, we notice that he regards himself as separate from Viṣṇu, for he says "Bhagavān Viṣṇu, and Brahmā recite the Rathantara Sāma in Śiva's presence". This shows that as a worshipper Kṛṣṇa is a different personality from Viṣṇu, and that is the reason why he becomes Sage Upamanyu's disciple and goes through the initiation ceremony. This ceremony itself does not seem to have been an essential part of Śiva worship, for Upamanyu does not state that he shaved his head or anointed himself with ghee. Nor do we find any other account of the ceremony being performed in the case of several other Śiva devotees named by Upamanyu. Yet, it is indicative of the fact that the Dīkṣā was a very ancient rite. It has now become an essential part of the (South Indian) Śaiva Siddhānta system.



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We have further details. The Anuśāsana parva ch. 49 contains the statements of many Śaiva devotees who gained several desires of theirs by worshipping that god. Vyāsa narrates how he uttered the Śiva Sahasranāma Stotra for gaining a son (Śuka). Kapila (the sage) says how he gained from Śiva the real knowledge capable of putting an end to life and death in the world. Cāruśīrṣa (the friend of Indra) alias Ālampāyana states that once he went to Gokarṇa and after doing penance in honour of Śiva, obtained 100 sons who were men having the brilliance of Brahmā (Brahmatējas). Vālmīki acknowledges how he was released from the sin of Brahmahatti which oppressed him because he had argued against the sanctity of the Vedas. Paraśurāma, likewise, relates the account of his purification (also by Śiva) from the sin of having slain the Kṣatriyas. Viśvāmitra gained, according to his own account, Brahmanhood from Śiva. Asita says that Śiva gave him Dharma, fame and longevity. Ṛṣi Ghrīṣmata says that because of his having committed a mistake while singing the Rathantara Sāma, he was cursed by a Ṛṣi to become a beast; but Śiva released him from that condition. Kṛṣṇa goes on to mention that he was given by Śiva the boon that he would be a bhakta of Śiva for all time. Jaigīṣavya, at Kāśi, Garga near the river Sarasvatī, are spoken of next as two Ṛṣis who similarly benefited. Māṇḍavya, Gālava (a disciple of Viśvāmitra) are two more who give evidence, from their personal experience, of the boon-bestowing nature of Śiva. Whether these accounts themselves are trustworthy or not, the fact of Śaivism having become one of the predominant forms of religion is evidenced thereby.

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In the foregoing accounts we have some clue to the nature of Śaivism as it was prevalent in the Epic Age. It was no longer a minor creed adopted by a small section of the people and held in contempt by the orthodox observers of Vedic rituals. It had become extraordinarily popular, and hosts of people, including the revered Ṛṣis, were its staunch adherents. Śiva had come to be regarded as the bestower of all kinds of gifts, and was therefore sought after by almost all. He was known to be the greatest of all Yōgis, excelling all gods in penance and power. This change in the popular attitude in favour of Śaivism must have come about during the long period of time which must have elapsed between the Vedic age and the Epic age. We have no means of discovering the exact duration of that interval. But we may well believe that it must have covered several centuries. In the accounts given above, we have the names of several Ṛṣis, who do not figure in the Vedas or even in the known Upaniṣads. The inference, therefore, is that they lived at a later period. There must have been numbers of holy men attached to the cause of Śaivism leading a life of austerity and penance whose memory was cherished by the people. Legends grew about them, and it was these legends that got into the Mahābhārata. Many of these great saints must have condemned Vedic rituals because they led to animal slaughter. This is reflected in the account of a conversation between Umā and Śiva as it appears in the Anuśāsana Parva. In chapter 213, Śiva extols the virtue of '*Ahimsā*' and says that 'non-killing is the first great Dharma; it is the first bliss; and it alone is in all the Dharma Śāstras' and so on. Umā asks, in reply, "If so, why do Brahmans kill animals in the great and small sacrifices?.... How did Rantideva obtain *Svarga*

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by killing daily 21,000 animals for feeding Brāhmans? ....Again, kings go out for hunts..... Did they not hear of Dharma? Or, did they disbelieve in it?" Śiva replies "There is none to be seen in the world who does not kill. He who walks kills with his feet...... many creatures. So too, he who sleeps......Creatures also kill each other...... He who eats grains eats several *jīvas* which are in them...... Abstinence is the greatest Dharma. Abstinence is the greatest bliss," and so on.

Here, the doctrine of *Ahimsā* is given prominence. There was, undoubtedly, developing a feeling in the country that in spite of all the good things done by Brahmans, they were not quite right in slaughtering numberless animals for sacrificial purposes. We have noticed how Nandi accused the Brahmans of eating sacrificed animals. Yet, the practice evidently continued and even after the recognition by orthodox Brahmans of Śiva or Maheśvara as one of the prominent gods, the sacrifices were being offered to the gods and that meant that animals were killed and eaten. We know that this feeling of revolt against the practice expressed itself most forcibly when Jainism came into being. Then orthodox Hindus themselves felt that they were in the wrong, and it is that thought that is reflected in Umā's question. The reply (put in the mouth of Maheśvara) is an acceptance of the truth in the doctrine, but it is also a partial defence; for, Śiva states that it is not possible for any one to live without *Himsā*. He does not directly state that it is wrong for Brahmans to perform sacrifices, or for kings to go a hunting. But he takes this opportunity of extolling the virtue involved in restraint. In another chapter,[8] where the same sub-

[8]Ch. 214.

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ject is pursued he says (and here we note a trace of the orthodox author's defence of sacrifices). "Only those (creatures) die that have to die. The ploughman does not kill them. He has only the thought 'let me plough' and not 'let me kill'. Hence, though he kills many thousands of creatures, that sin does not attach itself to him. The creature is first killed by fate and dies only afterwards. Hence no creature can escape fate. After the completion of its alloted life, it cannot live even for a minute. Nothing has died when it ought to live, nor will die.... The victims ruled by fate got killed of their own accord in Ranti Deva's sacrifice..... The river of blood named Carmaṇvati was unfit for use being filled with hoofs, horns and bones. After the blood fell upon it, it became sweet, holy, and fit for good works. During that king's *Sattra* sacrifice, Brahmans, Devas, lords of the directions and the three gods came in person and bathing in that river performed their oblations. They received according to Śāstraic rules the flesh that was given them having been purified by the mantras,........ That king attained heaven solely because he performed sacrifices incessantly, etc."

One cannot fail to detect the trait of orthodoxy in this attempt to justify acts which were regarded unjustifiable by those who regarded life sacred, and who gave the highest place to the virtue of *Ahimsā*. The Śaiva devotees whose ideal was asceticism and abstinence from animal, and if possible, even vegetable food cut themselves away from the observers of sacrificial ritual. Some of them developed into Jains and their cause was championed in the earlier days by the forerunners of Mahāvīra and at a later time by this reformer himself. Some others clung to the original religion of Brahmanism, though the practice of sacri-

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fices caused a feeling of revulsion in them. It is that feeling that is evidenced by Umā's question. But conservatism and veneration for the age-long Vedas impelled them to seek for justifications of customs which touched their conscience. The explanation attributed to Śiva reveals such a mentality. Hence one can reasonably infer that these ideas got into the text of the Mahābhārata at a period when the time was ripe for the rise of the protestant creed of Jainism.

In the story as narrated above, one point is clearly brought into prominence. Śiva is made to say some things in justification of Vedic rituals and sacrifices. We have seen before that there was a time when Śaiva devotees condemned them. How are we now to explain this justification? After Śiva's victory over Dakṣa Prajāpati and the Devas, he got accepted into the Brahmanical triad of the gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra; and as Rudra, he must support the practice of Vedic sacrifices. But he was also Mahādeva when he took to the life of the model *Yogi* or ascetic, in which state he was far beyond the scope and reach of Vedic rituals. It was Mahādeva, the god higher than all the Vedic gods, that Upamanyu and Kṛṣṇa praised. Interpreting the legend in this fashion, we get to know the two-fold nature of Śaivism in the Epic age. It was a path of *Yoga* and also a path of *bhakti*. Because Śaivism was a path of *Yoga,* there was no antagonism, in the age of the Mahābhārata between it and Vaiṣṇavism. When Viṣṇu praises Śiva (in the Mahābhārata) he does so since Śiva is then conceived of as the greatest ascetic or *Yogi*. Similarly the passages in the epic where Viṣṇu is praised by Śiva, the latter is Rudra, one of the traid, respecting the highest god conceived of as Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa by the Vaiṣṇavas. Yet, it

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is to be believed that the cause of extreme Śaivas (whose ideal was *Yoga* and who therefore could not bear the sight of sacrifices) suffered somewhat, owing to the acceptance of Śiva by the orthodox adherents of the old religion.

Śaivism of an extreme form which insisted on the renunciation of desires was bound to be unpopular. That was a path incapable of being trodden by the weak-minded. They, therefore, clung to the older religion (which made much of sacrifices) leaving austerities and wanderings to their strong-willed brethren. Those who performed penances and gained knowledge thereby of the ultimate truth were, by example and perhaps by precept, the teachers of the *Yoga* philosophy. Numbers of such *Yogis* must have lived in different secluded corners, in hills and valleys, and the penances they performed gave sanctity to those spots. They became *Tīrthas* or the holy places fit to be visited and worshipped by the common people. Looking at the chapters (79 *et seq.*) in the Vana parva, one notices that sages like Pulastya, Dhaumya and others narrate in detail the numerous holy places scattered all over India which are held in veneration because of the holy life led there by ascetics. Examining the fruits (*Phala*) mentioned as resulting from the baths and offerings in such Tīrthas, we find that they are of two sorts:—(1) the removal of sins great and small; and (2) the eligibility for the enjoyment of celestial pleasures (that are usually obtained by those who performed such sacrifices as the Vājapeya, Rājasūya, etc.). Here we have an indication of the things desired by the people. One section desired the removal of sin, and, if possible, final liberation (which is also mentioned as the fruit of *Tīrtha Yātras*). Another desired

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enjoyment. These were exactly the ideals respectively of the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇavas. After Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra came to be recognised as the supreme gods, Śaivas as well as Vaiṣṇavas believed equally in the rules laid down in the Vedas, and the teachings of the Upaniṣads, but they differed fundamentally in their conceptions of immortal bliss. To the Śaiva the goal to be reached was final liberation from all fetters, bodily and mental, by their total annihilation. Hence he conceived of Rudra as the inextinguishable, one who could never be destroyed, but who extinguished or destroyed everything else. That was why Rudra came to be called the Destroyer. In the final stage of the spiritual development of an individual, there ought to be no separateness at all from the supreme Śiva. He ought to transcend his body and mind, pleasure and pain, and all opposites or dualities. He should attain union or *Sāyujya* with Śiva in which condition he would not be able to regard himself as separate from Śiva. Till he reached that stage, he was imperfect, however pure he might be, however eligible he might be for the highest state of *Sāyujya*; for, those who were eligible had attained only the subordinate stages of *Sālōkya*, *Sāmīpya* and *Sārūpya*. That was also the reason why the doctrine of *avatārs* did not appeal to the Śaiva. God as an *avatār* was only a limited being, one who had the capacity, perhaps, of releasing himself from his fetters but not one without fetters. The Vaiṣṇava believed differently. He had also an equally clear conception of the highest state that could be reached, and that ought to be reached. But there was, according to him, nothing appealing in the idea of losing one's own individuality totally. One should be united with the supreme, and yet be conscious

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of the union. He should be united with the universe which again should be regarded as the other aspect of the supreme imperishable being. He was not, in other words, for the extinction of the universe as if it were something separate and distinct from the Supreme Puruṣa. He was rather in favour of the preservation of the Universe which was neither more nor less than the manifestation of the Puruṣa himself, and his yearning was therefore for union or identification with the Puruṣa so manifested. That was the reason why Viṣṇu was given the name of the Preserver. After all, it is but a difference in the way in which the truth is perceived or viewed. The Śaiva viewed the universe as an object of pain and misery—as *pāśa* or fetters (and one bound by it to be *Paśu*) which had to be broken and destroyed. The Vaiṣṇava regarded it as evidencing the greatness of the Puruṣa and so to be preserved. The Śaiva, with his superior pessimism (if it could be so called) was not likely to respect the Dharma Śāstras, the Artha Śāstras and other scriptures all of which were framed with the purpose of establishing orderliness in the world, inevitable for its welfare. He was bound to be a non-conformist, disdaining rules and conventions. Ideas of caste rigidity would be repugnant to the highly-evolved Śaiva who would at best tolerate such notions in others who had not reached his own stage of development. He would pay respect to and cultivate the society of only such people, to whatever caste they might belong) as were eligible for *Sāmīpya, Sālōkya, Sārūpya* and *Sāyujya,* with Śiva. The Vaiṣṇava, on the other hand, was more concerned with the preservation of all rules and regulations which would have the effect of promoting peace and happiness in the world. If 'Dharma' perished, the world would



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perish too, and, since the world ought not to perish, for it was a manifestation of the glory of the cosmic Puruṣa, his duty consisted in doing everything he could for preserving the Dharma. If things went beyond his control he was sure Viṣṇu would take the matter up himself; for he would come into the world as an *Avatār*. But when Viṣṇu did come upon the earth, it would be to destroy the wicked, that is, all those who were instrumental in upsetting the Dharma, and so it was necessary that one should be careful not to deserve that terrible punishment from Viṣṇu. Hence, the Āgamas or rules laid down for the guidance of Śiva bhaktas did not emphasise caste, and were concerned only with the duties of bhaktas in general, the proper fulfilment of which would render them fit to gain God vision, and ultimately union with Śiva. These were regarded as impure by the others because they were subversive of caste ideas, and as stated before, they were not alluded to in the orthodox scriptures.

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# CHAPTER VI.

## THE SPREAD OF ŚAIVISM IN THE EPIC AGE.

The Mahābhārata also furnishes us with materials about the regions where the worship of Śiva was prevalent. In chapters 85—88 of the *Vana Parva*, Dhaumya (the brother of Upamanyu) describes the several Tīrthas in the east, south, west and north of the Kuru Pāñcāla kingdom, and the sages and gods worshipped in those places. In the eastern direction,[1] there were the following :—(1) Naimiṣa Forest; it is now known as Nimsār, twenty-four miles from the Sandila station of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, and twenty miles from Sitapur. It is situated on the left bank of the river Gomati.[2] There many Devas and Deva Ṛṣis performed sacrifices. In that neighbourhood there is the sacred mountain known by the name of Gaya. People who visit that place have plenty of offspring. From that mountain flows a mahānadi called Phalgu. There is also a sacred fig tree by its side. (2) Another river named Kauśīkī (which is very near) is equally holy. This river is the Kuśi, a large tributary of the Ganges from the north. Its confluence with the Ganges in Bengal is called Kauśīkī Tīrtha. Viśvāmitra got Brahmanhood at that spot. Bhagīratha performed a sacrifice there. (3) Another sacred place is Kanyākubja—on the junction of the Ganges and the Kāli-nadi or Ikṣumatī, in Rohilkhand. There Viśvāmitra and Jāmadgnya, Sōma, and Indra

[1] Vana Parva Ch. 85.

[2] The identification of all these places has been given as found in the Index to the Kumbakonam Edn. of the Mahābhārata published by Mr. T. R. Krishnacharya with a few changes.

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performed penance and sacrifices. (4) The meeting place of the Ganges and the Yamunā is known 'all over the world' for its holiness. It has the name *Prayāga.* (Modern Allahabad). (5) Then there is Agastya-parvata, which forms part of the Kālañjaraparvata (Modern Kalanjar). The forest of penance in that region is known by the name of Hiraṇyabindu. (6) The hill of Mahēndra (different from that in the Ganjam District)—which is also a mountain sacred to Agastya. There, in olden times, Brahmā performed a sacrifice. (7) Kedārāśrama in the source of the river Bhāgīrathī where it is in the form of a lake having a grove surrounding it named Brahma Sāta. The Āśrama belongs to the Brahma ṛṣi Mātanga. (8) Kuṇḍōda Parvata (unidentified) where there is a forest of the gods. (9) River Bahudā (now known as Dhumila or Burha-Rapti, a feeder of the Rapti in Oudh).

In the southern direction—Vana Parva, Ch. 86.

(1) The River Gōdāvarī, abounding in parks and waters. (2) River Vēṇā and Bhīmarathī—Wainganga, a tributary of the Gōdāvarī and Bhīmā. There the Rājarṣi Nṛga (son of Ikṣvāku) attained celebrity as a sacrificer. (3) The river Payōṣṇī (now, the river Pūrṇā, one of the branches of the Taptī in Berar) is worshipped by the twice-born. It was in that place that Mārkaṇḍeya sang the praises of Nṛga's family. He who sees the trident-bearing Śiva there attains the kingdom of Śiva. There is a forest known as the Māḍhara vana. (4) To the north east of the river Pravēṇī (?), there is the Āśrama of Kaṇva. (5) Śūrpāraka, which is famous for the sacrificial altar of Jamadagni (Śūrpāraka is now known as Śopāra in the Bombay Presidency, 37 miles north of Bombay and

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about 4 miles N. W. of Bassein). (6) Agastya Tīrtha in the Pāṇḍya country. It is described in the Adi Parva 236.3 as being near the southern ocean. (7) Kumāri, in the Pāṇḍya country itself (Cape Comorin). It is spoken of as Kanyā tīrtham in Sabhā Parva 32. 75; Vana Parva 81, 112; and Vana Parva 82—83. In the last place, it is definitely stated as situated on the shore —'taṭastīrē samudrasya kanyātīrtham upaspṛśēt). (8) Tāmraparṇī—(the river in the Tinnevelly Dt.). (9) Gōkarṇam (a town in the North Kanara Dt. thirty miles from Goa). There is an *āśrama* belonging to a disciple of Agastya. There is another sacred to Agastya himself on the Vaiḍūrya mountain. (10) Prabhāsa (Somanath in Gujarat), with its Tīrtha called Piṇḍārakam. (11) The hill Ōrjayantaḥ, i.e. Mt. Girnar, close to Jūnagar in Kathiawar. (12) Dvāravatī, the place of Kṛṣṇa (Dvārakā in Gujarat).

Similarly several others are mentioned in the western and the northern directions. This description by Dhaumya is interesting because Dhaumya was the brother of Upamanyu, and most of the holy places mentioned by him are naturally regions where Śiva was worshipped. The localities specially valuable from the point of view of South Indian Śaivism are Gōkarṇa, Tāmraparṇī and Cape Comorin. This shows that at the time of the Mahābhārata, the south was well known and that Śaivism had penetrated to that quarter also. That the southerners accepted the Śaivism of the north which had its origin even in the Vedic age is evidenced thereby. In further proof of the prevalence of that form of Śaivism we have the mention of many South Indian Śiva Kṣetras in other portions of the great epic, e.g. (1) The Ṛṣikulya river in Ganjam is said to

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rise on the Mahendra hills.[3] (2) Mahānadi.[4] (3) Vaitaraṇi,[5] (4) Śrī parvata[6] (Śrī Saila in the Kurnool District). (5) Ṛṣabha Mountain.[7] (6) Kāvērī.[8] (7) Kanyā[9] or Cape Comorin. (8) Gōkarṇa.[10] (9) Veṇā, the Wain gaṅga.[11] (10) Godāvari.[12] (11) The source of the Kṛṣṇa-Vēṇā, i.e. the Kṛṣṇa.[13] (12) Payōṣṇi (Purṇa river).[14] (13) Daṇḍakāraṇya forest.[15] (14) Sūrpāraka.[16] (15) Saptagodāvari (?).[17] (16) Tuṅgakāraṇyam, probably the source of the Tuṅgabhadra river)[18] Later is mentioned Citrakūṭa (mountain) on the river Mandākini, 50 miles south-east of Baroda in Bundlekhand.

The ninth chapter of the Bhīṣma Parva also has some allusions to the countries and peoples of the south. Verse 58 refers to the Drāviḍas and Kēraḷas, v. 59 to the Karṇāṭakas and Kuntalas, v. 60 to the Cōḷas and the Koṅkaṇas. It is clear, therefore that these regions were well known. But it is the account of Sahadeva's *digvijaya* that makes a definite mention of the advance upon the southern countries, and since it is possible to trace the route of Sahadeva and since it

[3] Vana 82. 48f.

[4] Vana Ch. 82. v. 83.

[5] 83. 6.

[6] Betrani is a river near Cuttack in the Province of Orissa. Vana 83. 19.

[7] Vana 83. 21.

[8] Vana 83. 22.

[9] Vana 83. 23.

[10] Vana 83. 24. Place of Śiva worship. (Upaśānta umāpatim).

[11] V. 33.

[12] Vana 83. 34. The confluence with the Vēna is the bathing place.

[13] Vanā 83. 37.

[14] V. 40.

[15] V. 41.

[16] V. 43.

[17] V. 44.

[18] V. 46.

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throws light upon the existence of several Āśramas and Ṛṣis in the region of the Kāvērī, it is worth while examining it in some detail. It appears in chapters 32 and 33 of the Sabhā Parva. Chapter 32, verse 65 relates the conquest of the king of Bhōjakaṭa who must have been master of the northern part of Berar. The next place to which Sahadeva marched was Śūrpāraka which could not have been in Bijapur, as stated by Mr. Subba Rao, in his index to the Kumbakonam edition of the Mahābhārata; for Bijapur is far to the south, and several other places are mentioned to the north of Bijapur as having been passed by Sahadeva after he left Śūrpāraka.[18a] The next stopping place was Talākaṭam, or the Thal ghat through which the railway now passes from Nāsik to Kalyān. Then Sahadēva overpowered the rulers of the Daṇḍaka forest and passed on to conquer the islands Sāgaradvīpavāsāmśca) in the proximity of Bombay (probably, Bombay itself). The kings of those regions are spoken of as *'mlēcchayonijān'*, (born of barbarians). That was quite likely because several foreigners were carrying on trade in that locality. Afterwards the prince proceeded to the hill known as Kōlagiri, modern Kōlhāpur from where he passed on to Surabhipaṭṭaṇam, the identification of which is not quite definite. Yet it seems likely that it was Sōrab in the northern-western border of Mysore State in the Shimōga District. In that case, Sahadēva must have taken the road running south from Thāna to Kōlhāpur and thence to Belgaum. From this last place, he could have gone to Dhārwar and Hubli and then proceeding through the

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[18a] This is undoubtedly Sōpara in the Island of Bassein, North of Bombay, referred in the Buddhist Jātakas (the Soppāraka Jātaka), and a place of consequence as the capital of Northern Koṇkaṇ. *S. K.*

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road going to Gōkarṇa, he might have turned eastwards to reach Sorab *via* Kumta and Śiddāpur. If he did so, we can well understand how he gained possession of an island called Tāmram[19] which was very probably the Anjidiv-Island at the mouth of the Kalinadi. The next achievement of Sahadēva was the subjugation of tribes of people variously described as the one-footed, the forest-dwellers and the Kēraḷas. From there he must have advanced to some place from which he was able to send his men to receive tributes from the rulers of Nagari, of Saṁjayanti, of heretics (Pāṣaṇḍam) of Karahāṭaka, and also from the Pāṇḍya, Drāviḍa, Kēraḷa, Oḍra, Āndhra, Kaliṅga, etc. Here the poet gives only a summary of the further progress of Sahadeva, and we are therefore not in a position to fix exactly the localities visited by the prince. In the next chapter (Chapter 33), he narrates how Sahadēva reached the Kāvērī.[20] There he states "dakṣiṇam ca diśam jitvā cōḷasya viṣayam yayau". Putting the two accounts together, we have to mark that region from where the prince could possibly send envoys to all the places named in chapter 32, and from where he could go south to cross the Kāvērī. It seems very probable that after the conquest of islands, Sahadeva marched a little to the north along the coast as far as Cape Rāmās, for verse 70 of chapter 32 states that he took possession of the Rāmaka Mountain, which could not be either the Ramdurg mountain of the Bombay Presidency or the Raman durga hills in the neighbourhood of Hospet (in the District of Bellary); for Sahadeva had no necessity to go to those places when he was advancing south, which was his main object. Hence, we may

[19] V. 4.
[20] V. 3.

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believe that Sahadeva first went to Gōkarṇa, and then doing some fighting in the coast up to C. Ramas, retraced his steps and halted near Sorab at Siddhāpur, from where he sent his emissaries to distant places—even as far as Kaliṅga in the east. The Nagari of the epic might have been in the Shimoga District, (Mysore), and Karahāṭakan, Karhāḍ in the Southern Mahratta country. From Siddhāpur or Surabhi-paṭṭaṇam, Sahadeva had to pass southwards to cross the Kāvērī and reach the southern bank. This could most conveniently have been done, if he took the road starting from Siddhāpur and going through Sāgar, Shimōga and Kaḍūr. From Kaḍūr he must have cut across the country along the route through which the railway now runs between Kaḍūr and Tiptūr. That would make it easy for him to come to the south of the present Ciknayakanhalli from which the road running due south would take him to Seringapatam. The Kāvērī was probably crossed there. He does not seem to have gone to the Cōḷa capital (wherever it might have been located then), and according to the story, the Tamils were not able to see him to their entire satisfaction. Some of them accompanied him to the Pāṇḍya country. The route described is evidently a mountain route which abounded in elephants, forest tribes, tigers, deer, parrots, peacocks, mountain fowls, etc.[21] Since Sahadeva avoided the Cōḷa country (although he received various kinds of presents from the Cōḷa king, through his envoys) and since he passed through the mountain region, we can infer that he went from Seringapatam to Madura along the route passing through Mysore, Nanjangod, Gundalpet, Masinigudi, Ootacamund,

[21] VV. 22. 23.



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Coonoor, Avanāsi, Palladam, Poḷḷāchi, Uḍumalpet, Palni, Ḍinḍigul and then Madura. The picturesque scenery described in the text is explained thereby. From Madura, Sahadeva proceeded to pay respects to Agastya in the Podiyil Hills, and the route is quite clear—Tirumaṅgalam, Śrīvilliputūr, Saṅkaranainār-koil, Tenkāśi, Pāpanāśam. (The Podiyil Hills must be reached through the last mentioned place). The next place visited by the prince was Cape Comorin. The road taken for that must have been that going through Pāpanāśam, Sērmadēvi, and Nāgercoil, to Cape Comorin.

This, according to my hypothesis, was the line of Sahadeva's advance through the Southern country. It enables us to understand why the Mahābhārata lays much emphasis upon the sanctity of the two rivers the Kāvēri and the Tāmraparṇi, and the two places on the coast, Cape Comorin and Gōkarṇa. The great praise given to the Kāvērī in the epic is worth notice.[22]

In chapter 33 of the Sabhā Parva, verses 3 to 18 are a description of the different kinds of trees growing on its banks but verses 9 and 10 state that the Kāvērī

[22]Verses 4 to 13 Sabha Parva Ch. 33.
Dadarśa puṇyatōyām vai Kāvērīm saritām varām
nānā pakṣigaṇair juṣṭām tāpasairupaśōbhitām||
Sālalōdhrārjunairbilvairjambūśālmalakimśukaiḥ
Kadambaiḥ sapta parṇaiśca kaśmaryāmalakairvṛtām||
Nyagrōdhaiśca mahāśākhaiḥ plakṣairaudumbarairapi
Śamīpalāśavṛkṣaiśca aśvatthaiḥ khādirairvṛtām||
Badarībhiśca samchannām aśvakarṇaiśca śōbhitām
Cūtaiḥ punḍrakapatraiśca kadaḷīvanasamvṛtām
cakravākagaṇaiḥ kīrṇām plavaiśca jalavāyasaiḥ
Samudrakākaiḥ krauñcaiśca nāditām jala kukkuṭaiḥ||
Ēvam khagaiśca bahubhiḥ sanghuṣṭām jalavāsibhiḥ
Āśramairbahubhiḥ saktām caitya vṛkṣaiśca śōbhitām
Śōbhitām Brāhmaṇaiḥ subhrairvēdavēdangapāragaiḥ
kvacit tīraruhairvṛikṣair mālābhiriva śōbhitām, etc., etc.

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shines with the Āśramas of several Ṛṣis and pure Brahmans who have a thorough knowledge of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. In verses 12 ff. Sahadeva contemplates as follows:—"This Kāvērī is as sacred as the Gaṅgā of our parts (Asmadrāṣṭre yathā Gaṅgā Kāverī ca tathā śubhā)." It ought to be remembered that Sahadeva had a knowledge of the Kāvērī only in its upper course. It was Arjuna who saw it at its mouth. That is mentioned in chapter 235 of the Ādi Parva, vv. 14 and 15.

"Kāvērīm tām samāsādya sangamē sāgarasya ca.
Snātva sampūjya dēvāmścapitrīmśca munibhiḥ saha.
Samudra tīrēṇa śanair Maṇalūram jagāma ha."

After bathing at the place where the Kāvērī meets the sea and performing *pūja* to gods, pitṛs and munis, he slowly went along the coast and reached Maṇalūr, which is perhaps to be identified with Maṇamēlkuḍi at the mouth of the Valiyār (Veḷḷār south) river which divides the Pudukkōṭṭa State into two. He then asks the Pāṇḍya king to offer his daughter in marriage and the king replies that his ancestors worshipped Śiva[23] for offspring and through His grace one child was being born to each one of them. He also had only one and that was the daughter now asked for. Here we have a definite mention of the fact that the early Pāṇḍya kings were worshippers of Śiva. It shows how Śaivism had reached the southernmost corners of India in the Epic period. That is why our earliest available Tamil literature evidences the prevalence of Śaivism in South India.

[23]Ugrēṇa tapasā tēna dēva dēvaḥ pināka dhrik
Īśvaras tōṣitaḥ pārtha dēvadēva umāpatiḥ||
Sa tasmai bhagavān prādād ēkaikam prasavam kuḷe etc., etc. V. 23 f.

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Hence, the history of South Indian Śaivism becomes in reality nothing more than the history of the development in South India of the one form of Śaivism which was known to have prevailed throughout India in the Epic period.

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# CHAPTER VII.

## SAIVISM IN THE EARLIEST TAMIL LITERATURE.

The earliest known Tamil literature goes by the name of Śaṅgam works, and it is from them alone that we can have any idea of the social, political and religious condition of the Tamil land in the earliest period which we could reach back to at present. Looking at the *Tolkāppiyam,* which is a grammatical exposition of the Tamil language as it was in use in the days of the Śangam, we find that the Tamils were worshippers of the gods 'Māyōn' or Kṛṣṇa, 'Śēyōn' or the Red God (Subrahmaṇya), 'Vēndan' or Indra and Varuṇa.[1] "The forest region which is dear to the ocean-coloured, the mountain region dear to the red Murugan, the well watered river region dear to Indra and the sandy coast region which is dear to Varuṇa, are respectively known as *Mullai, Kuriñji, Marudam* and *Neydal*".[2] Here it is seen that at the time that the *Tolkāppiyam* came to be written, if not much earlier than that, the Vedic gods Indra and Varuṇa had come to be worshipped in the plain country (of rivers) and in the coasts. This shows that the people living in these regions of South India were not different in their religion from the people who were the earliest inhabitants of Āryāvarta in the

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[1] மாயோன் மேய காடுறை யுலகமும்
சேயோன் மேய மைவரை யுலகமு
வேந்தன் மேய தீம்புன லுலகமும்
வருணன் மேய பெருமணல் லுலகமும்
முல்லை குறிஞ்சி மருதம் நெய்தலெனச்
சொல்லிய முறையாற் சொல்லவும்படுமே......Tol. Por. 5

[2] Nach. Com. p. 13.

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north. It was Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, etc., that were the characteristically Āryan gods to whom the men of the Vedic times performed sacrifices. Thus, at some remote period, about which nothing can be precisely told, men of the north spread their religious conceptions in the southern countries. The time when the events of the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata took place might have been the period of such a religious movement in the land, for both these epics make mention of the advance of the northerners into the southern country. It was Śiva or Rudra that was regarded as the mountain deity in the land of the northerners; but we find that the Tamils regarded Muruga or Subrahmaṇya as the god of that quarter. In Vedic times, the worship of Subrahmaṇya was unknown, though the name appears in the *Taittirīya* Āraṇyaka, Praśna I, Anuvāka 12 v. 58. There Agni and Vāyu are spoken of as the servants or attendants of Indra, called by the name Subrahmaṇya.[3] We do not have any hymns addressed to him. But in the period of the Epics, we have allusions to the birth of Kārtikēya or Subrahmaṇya. He is spoken of as the son of Rudra or Agni. The worship of Subrahmaṇya surely was a consequence of the development of Rudra worship or Śiva worship. We have noticed above that Rudraism or Śaivism developed even during the days of the Atharva Veda. The southerners were influenced by this apparently widespread movement, and, identifying their own old deity Muruga with Subrahmaṇya, regarded him as an equal to Indra and Varuṇa. The rise of Śaivism had its reaction in the rise of Vaiṣṇavism in the north; and just in the same

[3]Indrāyāhi sahasrayuk| agnirvibhrāṣṭi vasanaḥ| vāyuśśvetasikadrukaḥ| ...... nityāste'nucarāstava| Subrahmaṇyōm,

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manner in which the former spread over to the south in the remote past, the latter faith too came to the south. Viṣṇu got the name of Māyōn. But at the time when Indra, Varuṇa, the Red God and the Blue god came to be worshipped for the first time in the South, the last two deities were not regarded as superior to all the other gods. They were given only a position of equality with the rest and were therefore worshipped just in the same manner in which the others were worshipped. The manner of worship also seems to have been influenced by the northerners, for, we notice in the Śangam works, something like Vedic sacrifices being performed in the southern country. Naccinārkiṇiyar, the commentator of the *Tolkāppiyam* (Poruḷ), thus explains the manner of worship in vogue in early times, and supports his statements with texts selected from the Śaṅgam writings. He says (pp. 13th and 14th of Poruḷ, Commentary): "The shepherds of the *mullai* region, offer several oblations to the sacrifice receiving Māyōn so that cattle may be fruitful; and they jointly pray 'protect our numerous cows' ".[3a] Here we notice a close similarity between the Vedic ritual of sacrifices, oblations and prayers. If we cannot infer from this that the southerners borrowed these ideas from the northerners, we must postulate that the northerners borrowed them from the south. Or, we must hold that both the northerners and the southerners developed this practice independently. Whatever be the truth, we detect that worship in such remote periods of time consisted in sacrifices, oblations and prayers. In the *Kuriñji* region, the Kuravas (or the dwellers

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[3a] Kalittogai. 105.

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of the forest region), and others are found to do the same thing to the Red God.[4]

"She will recover if the powerful and famous Muruga who destroyed the peoples of the earth, is worshipped". In the same manner Indra and Varuṇa were also worshipped by people living in their respective regions.[5]

The one thing that strikes us in such worship is that it was not impossible for all castes to worship those gods. We do not find any priest functioning; nor do we find any very elaborate rules laid down regarding the manner in which sacrifices had to be celebrated. The people believed that if they offered the oblations, the god of that region would reveal himself. Usually it was in the person of some body that the god showed himself. Apparently anybody might serve as the agent through whom the god would speak. It is possible to understand the popular faith in such a manner of god revelation, because we have even at the present time, in South India, a belief among the common folk in such god manifestations. Whenever cholera or small-pox is prevalent, people join together and conduct some ceremonies, and suddenly somebody gets god-possessed (according to the belief of the masses), and says certain things. This function of pointing out the mistakes committed by people which are the cause of their sufferings is specially discharged by Subrahmaṇya. He reveals himself through such god-possessed individuals on the occasions of his *Pūja*,

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[4] படி யோர்த் தேய்த்த பல் புகழ்த் தடக்கை
நெடு வேட் பேணத் தணிகுவளிவள்
*Aham* 22 quoted by Nachinārkiniyar.

[5] *Kalittogai* 98 for Indra; Also *Pattuppāṭṭu-Paṭṭinappālai* 86, 87; *Aham* 109 and *Aham* 240 for Varuṇa.

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usually on the Tai Pūśam (full moon of makara, December-January) day. Śāstā is a god of the Malayāḷam country who still shows himself in this fashion. Whatever might be the logic of such beliefs, they represent the views of the bye-gone days in the Tamil land. One can almost surely regard them as having been the prevalent notions of the common people (and therefore indigenous) from the earliest times. The fact of the mention of Indra, Varuṇa, etc., alone makes one believe that Vedic influences prevailed. Yet, from the manner in which these Vedic gods were regarded in the days of the *Tolkāppiyam* (which must be anterior to some poems at least which appear in the Śangam collections),[6] we can form an idea also of the extent to which the Vedic influence prevailed among the common people. They were ready to believe in these gods, but they could not give up their ancient and time-honoured customs. They worshipped them along with the other gods and, though they apparently gave them a higher place, they adopted the same manner of worship. This was not objected to by the northerners (who spread this faith), because, after all, their mode of worship was not different from the Vedic form, except for the fact that hymns were not employed, the Sāma was not sung. It is conceivable that the southerners sometimes used even the fire though perhaps they did not construct fire-altars (*homa kuṇḍas*).

If Northern beliefs came to the Tamil land in the time when the events of the Rāmāyaṇa or the Mahābhārata took place, they were bound to be considerably

[6]For, Śiva is distinctly mentioned as the three-eyed god in some *Puṟam* and *Aham* verses, but he is not so referred to in the *Tolkāppiyam*.



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influenced by the indigenous religious tendencies of the South, because those who came over to the south must have been very few in number. This is clearly seen in their conception of *Śēyōn*, or the Red God. He was equated with Subrahmaṇya by the upper classes of the people as is evidenced by reference to him in *Puṟam* 56 which will be noticed in detail later, but the conception of Muruga or Subrahmaṇya among the masses was of a low order. In the *Tolkāppiyam* Poruḷ 60, there is reference to the (வெறியாட்டு) invocation of this god conducted by the *Vēlan*, so called because he held the spear in his hand. In the *Naṟṟiṇai* we have several references to this deity being believed to be causing trouble to young girls. For that purpose, *bali* or offerings were made by the *Vēlan* to the god. It is this that is referred to in verses 34, 47, 173, 273, 282, 351, and 376. Poets are very fond of comparing the leanness in the sweet-heart owing to her separation from her lover to the change effected in the physical features of a *Muruga*-possessed person. Such a conception of *Muruga* is in no way better than that of a demon or a ghost. There is one stanza in *Naṟṟiṇai* which may be taken to throw some light upon the origin of the *Muruga Vēḷ* himself and ends thus:—

கடம்பின் கண்ணி சூடி
வேலன் வேண்ட வெறி மனை வந்தோய்
கடவு ளாயினும் ஆக (மடவைமன்ற) வாழியமுருகே—

*Naṟṟiṇai*, 34.

which means, "O, you who came when invoked by the *Vēlan* who adorned himself with the *Kaḍamba* garland. If you like, be a God—you are innocent. Live long in innocence". The general life of the people

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must have remained very much the same that it had been before this intrusion of northern deities. The Tamils, as evidenced by the accounts of their activities in the *Śaṅgam* works, were a vigorous people taking delight mostly in love and war, and that is the reason why the whole of the *Śaṅgam* literature is capable of being divided into two broad groups as *Aham* and *Puṟam*. Since the songs themselves were either in praise of the martial exploits of heroes or of their fickleness or constancy in love matters, we have no opportunity of estimating the real extent of the progress of religious thought in that age. Yet, from occasional allusions and incidental references we do have unmistakable evidence of the spread of Brāhmaṇic philosophy and Purāṇic mythology in the Tamil land even at that remote period. This was no doubt due to the migration of numbers of Brahmans to the south and to their permanent settlement in the Tamil country. Many of them were great scholars in Tamil and numbers of them gained celebrity as *Śaṅgam* poets. It is fruitless to examine when they came, for the truth seems to be that there is no evidence of a time antecedent to their coming. The Ṛṣis, *Sanyāsins* and householders of the North were always moving about throughout the length and breadth of India either for penance or pilgrimage, and some of them fixed themselves permanently in the Tamil country in different periods of time. Not coming as conquerors, they never came into conflict with the earlier peoples. On the other hand, the life they led was one of piety and devotion, and hence was bound to win for them the respect

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and admiration of the men in whose midst they came to settle. It is such a feeling of respect that finds expression in the *Saṅgam* works. For instance, the respect shown to the Brahman wife is seen from a description of her in the *Kalittogai* 52:

தாமரைக் கண்ணியைத் தண்ணறஞ் சாந்தினை
நேரிதழ்க் கோதையாள் செய்குறி நீவரின்
மணங்கமழ் நாற்றத்து மலைநின்று பலிபெறூஉ
மணங்கென வஞ்சுவர் சிறுகுடி யோரே

"Those of humble families will fear you, you with your lotus eyes, and cool and fragrant sandal paste, taking you for the goddess who has her seat in the fragrant mountain and who receives offerings, if you should appear". In this account, we have evidence of the worship of a goddess (Kollippāvai) in the mountain to whom offerings are made by people belonging to the lower castes. At the same time, it gives evidence of a high regard for the Brahman woman. So we see clearly that the prevalence of purely indigenous forms of worship was not incompatible with the acceptance of Brāhmaṇic conceptions about ethics and philosophy. Sūtra 26 of the *Tolkāppiyam* Poruḷ deals with the reasons justifying the separation of Brahmans, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas from their wives:—

அவற்றுள், ஓதலுந் தூது முயர்ந்தோர் மேன

"The three higher classes may separate themselves for Vedic study, and for the purposes of doing the work of ambassadors." This also is proof of the fact that the Brahmans had become an integral part of the Tamil people with special functions of their own. The duty

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of going for Vedic study is referred to (in *Aham* 125) in the words

> கைதொழு மரபில் கடவுள் சான்ற
> செய்வினை மருங்கிற் சென்றோர்

'those who went to study the work relating to the god worthy of being worshipped'. Here it is the Vedic study pursued by the first three castes that is alluded to (according to Naccinārkiniyar's commentary on *Tolkāppiyam* Poruḷ, p. 68). The Vedas and Vedic scriptures are definitely mentioned in the *Tolkāppiyam*, Poruḷ 41 as the fittest for those born in the higher castes.

Though the Tamil people were thus aware of the Vedas and the Vedic scriptures, since Brahmanism or the Vedic religion did not spread as an aggressive creed uprooting all the earlier forms of worship, we find in the Śaṅgam works direct references to the indigenous deities. One such was the hero-stone or நடுகல். In reality, it was only a stone planted in commemoration of a hero. Yet, people sometimes honoured it as if it were a deity and worshipped it. This is referred to in *Aham* 35 as being prayed to by Maṟavar.

> வில்லேர் வாழ்க்கை விழுத்தொடை மறவர்
> வல்லாண் பதுக்கைக் கடவுட் பேண்மார்
> நடுகற் பீலிசூட்டித் துடிப்படுத்துத்
> தோப்பிக் கள்ளொடு துரூஉப்பலி கொடுக்கும்

The hero-stone was adorned with peacock feathers and offerings of toddy were made. Yet, the generality of the people had, in the Śaṅgam period, a very clear conception of the gods of the Purāṇas. *Puṟam* 56 gives direct evidence of it. There a king is compared

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to Śiva, Viṣṇu, Balarāma and Subrahmaṇya for his various qualities. The description of these gods is in accordance with the descriptions of them in the Purāṇas.[7] Śiva is spoken of as having a long braid of hair shining like a flame, a flag having the strong bull for his ensign and a blue neck. Balarāma is mentioned as being of a white colour and as holding the weapon of the plough. His flag bears the Palmyra sign. Viṣṇu is described as having the ensign of a bird (Garuḍa) and being of the blue colour of the emerald found in the earth; and Subrahmaṇya (called Śēyōn and also Muruga), is spoken of as riding the elephant Piṇimukham of unfailing victory, and holding the flag of a peacock. It is, however, noteworthy that Śiva is called also the Kūṟṟam which is a name usually applied to Yama or the god of death. Possibly that is because his destructive aspect was a prominent feature at that time.

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[7] ஏற்றுவல னுயரிய வெரிமருள விர்சடை
மாற்றருங் கணிச்சி மணிமிடற் றோனுங்
கடல்வளர் புரிவளை புரையுமேனி
யடல்வெந் நாஞ்சிற் பனைக்கொடி யோனு
மண்ணுறு திருமணி புரையு மேனி
விண்ணுயர் புட்கொடி விறல்வெய் யோனு
மணிமயி லுயரிய மாறா வென்றிப்
பிணிமுக வூர்தி யொண்செய்யோனு மென
ஞாலங் காக்குங் காலமுன்பிற்
றோலா நல்லிசை நால் வருள்ளுங்
கூற்றொத் தீயே மாற்றருஞ் சீற்றம்
வலியொத் தீயே வாலி யோனைப்
புகழொத் தீயே யிகழுநரடுநனை
முருகொத் தீயே முன்னியது முடித்தலின் (Nakkīrar, Puṟam 56).

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It is just possible that the *Tolkāppiyam* was older than this stanza of the *Puṟam* as also a few other poems in it which have references to Śiva, e.g. :

ஓங்கு மலைப் பெருவிற் பாம்பு ஞாண் கொளீஇ
யொரு கணை கொண்டு மூவெயிலு டற்றிப்
பெருவிறலமரர்க்கு வென்றி தந்த
கறை மிடற் றண்ணல் சாமர் சென்னிப்
பிறைநுதல் விளங்கு மொருகண் போல (Puṟam, 55).

Here we have reference to the destruction of the three castles, the blue neck, the moon on the head and the eye on the forehead. Poems 1, 6, 91, 166 and 198 of the *Puṟam* also allude to Śiva. The fact that Śiva is not mentioned as a deity in the *Tolkāppiyam* may be indicative of the fact that the *Tolkāppiyam* was much older than at least some poems of the *Aham, Puṟam* and other *Śaṅgam* works. Be that as it may, Śiva was not, it is clear, regarded as the god of any geographical region. He also does not seem to have been worshipped by the majority of the people who were only Maṟavas, Kuṟavas, etc., and were satisfied with the local gods and such inferior gods as *Naḍukal,* etc. It was only a small minority even among the cultured classes that could have had a knowledge of the Purāṇic stories, and their songs in prayer or praise, were bound to contain references to Purāṇic deities about Śiva, Viṣṇu and other gods who were worshipped in non-Tamil lands also. References to Śiva are absent in the *Naṟṟiṇai.* Poems appearing in it have been composed by as many as 175 poets, and though some of them, for instance Bhāratampāḍiya Peruṁdēvanār and Nakkīrar, knew of the Purāṇic stories, and of Śiva (as evidenced by their poems in the *Puṟam*), yet they give no indication

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of such knowledge of theirs in the songs making up the *Naṟṟiṇai*. In the invocatory verse at the beginning of the *Naṟṟiṇai*, Bhāratampāḍiya Perumdēvanār is said to have translated one of the meditation *ślokas* appearing in the Viṣṇu Sahasranāma.[8] That is a clear proof of the prevalence of north Indian religious influence upon some poets of the southern country. In the same collection, poem 32 is written by Kapilar, who describes himself in poem 200 of *Puṟam* as a Brahman.—

யானே பரிசிலன் மன்னு மந்தணன்

He must therefore have had a knowledge of the Purāṇas, etc., and it is revealed in the poem[9] by a reference to Kṛṣṇa and Baladēva.—

மாயோ னன்ன மால்வரைக் கவா அன், வாலியோனன்ன.

Śalliyam-kumaranār, whose caste is not known, refers to ascetics of braided hair performing penances underneath the Konṟai trees. Since the Konṟai garland is the one worn by Śiva,

கண்ணி கார் நறுங்கொன்றை

we may infer that it is Śaiva ascetics that are referred to thus.—

கொன்றை, நீடிய சடையோ டாடா மேனிக், குன்றுறை தவசியர் போல [10]

Another poet Miḷaikiḻān Nalvēṭṭanār, a Veḷḷāḷa by caste,[11] makes a remark that success in war and in the world is a result of Karma, etc.—

நெடிய மொழிதலுங் கடியவூர்தலுஞ், செல்வமன்று தன் செய்வினைப் பயனே[12]

This is a Purāṇic or Śāstraic idea. Again, poet

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[8] p. 54 of the Introduction of Naṟṟiṇai.

[9] 32 of Naṟṟiṇai.

[10] Naṟṟiṇai, 141.

[11] Introduction p. 49.

[12] Naṟṟiṇai, 210.

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Iḷanāhanār alludes to the Sapta Ṛṣis or Seven Ṛṣis in the *Naṟṟiṇai* poem 231.—

மையற விளங்கிய மணிநிற விசும்பிற்
கைதொழு மரபி னெழுமீன் போல

These and other instances similar to these, amply evidence the spread of religious ideas which are characteristically north Indian or Āryan. Some kings too of the Śaṅgam period adopted Vedic practices and ceremonials by performing sacrifices, as the names themselves indicate, e.g., Palyāga Śālai Mudu Kuḍumip-peruvaḷudi,[13] and Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṟkiḷḷi.[14] Poet Śāttantandaiyār expresses in the *Puṟam*[15] the idea that those who fall in battle, without running away from the field, will attain heaven:

உயர் நிலை யுலகத்து நுகர்ப வதனால்

That is again a Purāṇic conception expressed in many places, e.g., in the Bhagavad Gītā;—"Hatōva prāpsyase svargam"[16] (i.e., if you die you will attain Heaven). It is in sūtra 75 of the *Tolkāppiyam*[17] (Poruḷ) that we have unmistakable proof of the very definite notions that everyone in the Tamil land had about the respective duties of the different castes.

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[13]Poems, 6, 9, 12, 15, etc.

[14]Puṟam 125.

[15] 287.

[16] II. 37.

[17] அறு வகைப்பட்ட பார்ப்பனப் பக்கமு
மைவகை மரபினரசர் பக்கமு
மிருமூன்று மரபினேனோர் பக்கமு
மறுவில் செய்தி மூவகைக் காலமு
நெறியினாற்றிய வறிவன்றேயமும்
நாலிரு வழக்கிற் றாபதப் பக்கமும்
பாலறி மரபிற் பொருநர் கண்ணு
மனைநிலை வகை யோடாங் கெழுவகையிற்
றொகைநிலை பெற்றதென் மனார் புலவர்.



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Naccinārkiniyar has commented upon this sūtra, and the following is a free translation of some portions of his commentary. The first line means "The group of Brāhmanic duties which are six-fold". The commentary runs as follows:—"The six-fold Brahmanic duties become eighteen-fold since each one of the primary duties is capable of being classified as duties of first-rate, second-rate, or third-rate importance. The six main functions of the Brahman are (1) studying the Vedas, (2) teaching the Vedas, (3) performing sacrifices for themselves, (4) performing them for others, (5) making gifts and (6) receiving them. Of these, the first (studying the Vedas) will become a duty of first-rate importance, if the Ṛk, Yajus, or the Sāma is studied. It will be second-rate, if the Atharva Veda, the Vedāṅgas and the Dharma Śāstraṣ are studied. It will be third-rate, if the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas are studied. The same division applies to the second duty of teaching the Vedas". Similar explanations are given for the rest. Naccinārkiniyar comments upon the word பக்கம் (p. 246) of the first line, and says that the word has been purposely used so as to include also those who were born of Brahman unions with non-Brahman women. Such people were not entitled to all the six duties of the Brahmans. Naccinārkiniyar also takes a poem[18] from the *Puṟa Nānūṟu* to illustrate the Brahmanic custom of performing sacrifices. This poem begins with a mention of Śiva:

நன்றாய்ந்த நீணிமிர் சடை, முது முதல்வன் வாய்போகா,
ஒன்று புரிந்த வீரிரண்டி, னாறுணர்ந்த வொரு முதுநூல் etc.

The phrase '*Mudumudalvan*' means Śiva, and the quo-

[18] 166 of the Puṟam..

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tation means that the one Veda classified as the four Vedas and understood by means of the six Vēdāngas is ever on the tongue of Śiva of fully cultivated understanding, and high matted locks. The point worthy of notice here is that the Veda (which according to tradition came out of its own accord, and not from the mouth of anybody) is described as abiding for ever on the tongue of Śiva. He alone therefore is fit to reveal the Veda, or make it known to the world. Again, anyone uttering the Veda, necessarily utters the word of Śiva, for the Veda cannot separate itself from the word of Śiva. Such a conception can originate only from one who regards Śiva as the highest god. Thus it is evident that the poet (Āvūr Mūlam Kiḻār) was a believer in Śaivism. Lower down in the same poem, the poet exhibits (as became the fashion with the *Tēvāram* hymners of a later date), an attitude of antagonism towards the followers of other religious sects (Buddhists, etc., according to the annotator).

முதுநூலிகல் கண்டோர் மிடல் சாய் மார், மெய்யன்ன பொய்
யுணர்ந்து, பொய்யோராது மெய் கொளீஇ

which means "those who kept down from prevailing the teaching of people who, in hostility to the venerable Holy Book, accept as truth what is false without understanding that what they take to be truth is really false". Here is a definite mention of the fact that there were some who were disbelievers in the Vedas. That there were such people in (Northern India) is evidenced by a verse in the Vana Parva of the Mahābhārata where Mārkaṇḍēya tells Yudhiṣṭhira what the condition of the people in the Kali age will be,

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"Na vratāni cariṣyanti brāhmaṇā Vēdanindakāḥ",[19] i.e., "They (will) respect no vows; (though) Brahmans, they (will) denounce the Vedas". This Puṟam poem is in praise of a Brahman (Pūnjāṟṟūr Pārppān Kauṇiyan, Brahman Kauṇḍinya of Pūm Śāttūr) who performs a sacrifice. Hence the poem reveals the poet's attitude of respect not only to Śiva, but also to Vedic rituals such as sacrifices performed by pure Brahmans for the welfare of the community. This shows that Śaivism was not regarded as incompatible with the Karma path of Vedic sacrifices.

The twin classics, the *Śilappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai* throw more light upon the development of different religious beliefs in South India. It is clear from them that there were a pretty large number of people who were Śaivas. There were also temples constructed for a number of deities some of whom were not the traditional gods of the Tamils noticed in the *Tolkāppiyam.* At the present moment one cannot be positive about the time when these classics were written. It is just possible that they were written in the last quarter of the second century A.D.; but there is no conclusive evidence in favour of it. All that can therefore be said about the history of South Indian Śaivism, in the earliest period of South Indian history, is that in the early centuries of the Christian era, the Purāṇas were known to the Tamils, and that Śaivism, as known to the northerners, was also known to the people of the South. They might have been a small section of the community, but their knowledge of the northern

[19] Vana Parva 193. 26.

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creed (for, it has to be regarded as a northern religion since Śiva is not included in the gods mentioned in the *Tolkāppiyam*) was sufficiently thorough going.

Though allusions to Śiva or Viṣṇu in the two epics are few and far between, they show that people had equal respect for both the deities and so, for both the creeds; e.g. Nakkīrar, the author of Puṟam 56, compared king Ilavandigaippaḷḷittuñjiya Nanmāṟan to Śiva, Balarāma, Viṣṇu and Subrahmaṇya. He had evidently equal respect for all these four gods. Since Subrahmaṇya and Śiva go together, as also Balarāma and Viṣṇu, Nakkīrar may be said to have looked upon Śiva and Viṣṇu with equal reverence. Again Perumdēvanār "who sang the Bhāratam" has sung of Śiva in the Puṟam, and Viṣṇu in *Naṟṟiṇai* (the first poems in each collection). In the *Śilappadikāram*, we do not perceive any inclination to belittle one creed and extol another. In canto 26, lines 54 to 67, it is stated that Śeṅguṭṭuvan worshipped both Śiva and Viṣṇu.[20]: The king wearing Śiva's feet on his head put on Viṣṇu's garland round his neck. We also know that this

[20] நிலவுக் கதிர் முடித்த நீளிருஞ் சென்னி
யுலகுபொதி யுருவத் துயர்ந்தோன் சேவடி
மறஞ்சேர் வஞ்சி மாலையொடு புனையுந்
திறைஞ்சாச்சென்னி யிறைஞ்சி வலங்கொண்டு
மறை யோரேந்திய வாவுதி நறும்புகை
நறைகெழு மாலையி னல்லகம் வருத்தக்
கடக்களியானைப் பிடர்த்தலை யேறினன்
குடக்கோக் குட்டுவன் கொற்றங்கொள்கென
வாடக மாடத்தறிது யிலமர்ந்தோன்
சேடங்கொண்டு சிலர் நின்றேத்தத்
தெண்ணீர்கரந்த செஞ்சடைக் கடவுள்
வண்ணச்சேவடி மணிமுடிவைத்தலி
னாங்கதுவாங்கி யணிமணிப்புயத்துத்
தாங்கினனாகித் தகைமையிற் செல்வுழி.

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Śeṅguṭṭuvan's family deity was a local god of the Ayirai hill. (This is referred to not only in the *Padiṟṟuppattu* "அயிரைபரைஇ" 3rd *padigam*), but also in *Śilappadikāram*[21] (உருகெழுமரபினயிரைமண்ணி). The same dynasty (Cēras) worshipped another god known as the Śadukkaippūdam, i.e. (the Bhūtam of the square).

சதுக்கைப்பூதரை வஞ்சியுட்டந்து [23]

The object with which Śeṅguṭṭuvan went north was to bring a stone from the Himalayas to make an idol of Pattini and establish the worship of the 'goddess of chastity' (Pattini). The same king is spoken of as having also celebrated a sacrifice (the Rājasūya) in accordance with the advice tendered by the Brahman Māḍalan:

மாடல மறையோன் சொல்லிய முறைமையின், வேள்விச் சாந்தியின் விழாக் கொளவேவி. [23]

Thus it is clear that at the time the *Śilappadikāram* was written there was no hostility between rival faiths. On the other hand, a sort of universal tolerance seems to have been in vogue.

Looking into the *Maṇimēkalai,* which is after all only the story of a girl who became a nun, we notice the beginnings of an enquiry into the question 'which philosophy is superior to which else?'. That is seen from the account in the poem that Maṇimēkalai listened to the doctrines of the different religious creeds and finally rejected them all as being unconvincing. The story is found to Book XXVII of

[21] Canto 28, line 145.
[22] Canto 28, line 148.
[23] Canto 28, ll. 191, 192.

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the poem.[24] It is worth while to examine it in some detail. First, Maṇimēkalai went to the 'leader of the votaries of the path of the Veda'. 'He pointed out that three teachers were recognised as of authority among them, Vyāsa, Kṛtakōṭi and Jaimini'. He went on to explain his views. Maṇimēkalai passed on to the Śaiva Vādi. The current views on Śaivism are found in a nutshell. "He stated that the two lights (the sun and the moon), the doer and the five elements constitute the basis from out of which human beings are made by combination of life and body. He who does this is constituted of the Kālas; his nature it is to create beings as an act of play, and he destroys them and thus gets rid of their sufferings; and He, besides whom there is no one else, such a one is my God."[25] Later on, she goes to the Brahma Vādi. It is doubtful if by this expression is to be understood the votary of the Upaniṣadic Brahman. It is quite probable that the Brahma Vādi means merely the worshipper of the God Brahmā, as opposed to the Brahman whose nature is Sat-cid-ānanda (Existence-knowledge-Bliss-absolute). I am led to this conclusion because all references to Brahmā in the Tēvāram hymns of Sambandar are to the four-faced Brahmā. The next person whom Maṇimēkalai consulted was a 'teacher who had eagerly studied the Purāṇa of Viṣṇu and he said that 'Nārāyaṇa was the protector of all'. Is it possible then that the spread of Vaiṣṇavism in the Tamil land was due to the spread of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa? It was very likely, but one

[24] Dr. S. K. Aiyangar's translation is very helpful in understanding the text.

[25] Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, Maṇimēkhalai, p. 192.

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cannot be certain about it. Then the heroine went to the Vēdavādi to whom the Vēdas constituted the highest authority. These were different from the 'votaries of the path of the Vēda' mentioned previously. The latter had another name 'Aḷavai Vādis' or those who gave prominence to the *pramāṇas* or the 'instruments of knowledge', e.g. 'direct perception', 'inference', 'similitude', 'authority', 'inferential assumption', 'appropriateness', 'tradition', 'negation', 'inference by elimination or by correlation' and 'occurrences'. The Vēda Vādis, on the other hand, relied upon the Vēdāṅgas as their authoritative scriptures. To them Āraṇa or 'the unborn source of knowledge, having neither beginning nor end' was the final word. Maṇimēkalai was not satisfied with their doctrines also, and so she next approached the Ājīvakas. Their philosophy which gave real existence only to five things, life, earth, water, fire and air, also failed to carry conviction. She then asked the Nirgranthas who replied 'Our deity is that one who is worshipped by the Indras'. After listening to them she made enquiries of the believers in the Sāṅkhya who spoke about the Mūla Prakṛti, the Mahat, Ākāśa, Vāyu, Agni, Water, etc. Then she went to the Vaiśēṣika who also could not convince her. 'She addressed herself last of all to the Bhūta Vādi. After hearing his arguments, she 'laughed in scorn at the imperfections of his argument'. Finally she obtained what she wanted from Aṟavaṇa Aḍigaḷ.

In the foregoing account the author of the Maṇimēkalai plays the role of the disbeliever in all philosophical systems except that of the Buddhist. For our

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purpose it is enough that the story reveals the different forms of religion and philosophy that were current at that time. We detect a trace of intolerance in Śāttanār, the author of the *Maṇimēkalai,* that is absent in the other classic. We cannot be wrong in believing that both the classics were composed about the same time, for we have internal evidence about it in them. 'Such an investigation clearly reveals the intimate connection between *Śilappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai* itself as literary works, products of a single age, a single tradition and of a very similar atmosphere'.[26] If Iḷaṅgō Aḍigaḷ, the author of the *Śilappadikāram,* was the brother of Śēran Śeṅguṭṭuvan, as tradition has it (and as is stated in the *padigam* of the *Śilappadikāram*) we may attribute the twin classics to the close of the second century A.D.; for we may rely upon the well-known Gajabāhu synchronism. Accepting this hypothesis, we may infer that up to the close of the second century A.D. there does not seem to have been much of an opposition or intolerance among the votaries of the different religions in South India.

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[26] Vide Dr. S. K. Aiyangar. Ancient India, p. 382; Beginnings of South Indian History, p. 153.

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# CHAPTER VIII.

## THE PERIOD OF THE ŚAIVA NĀYANĀRS

### *The Minor Nāyanārs.*

It is when we come to the Śiva devotees of the *Periya Purāṇam,* that we gain a knowledge, however fragmentary, of the effect of Śaivism upon the Tamils. Of the 63 Nāyanārs whose lives are outlined in the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai* which has been elaborated in the *Periyapurāṇam,* many were *Veḷḷāḷas,* some were Brahmans, some belonged to the aboriginal castes, and some to other higher castes. Whensoever these devotees lived, it is certain that that was a period when ordinary conceptions of caste did not weigh very much with those who were Śiva Bhaktas who regarded that a life of devotion to Śiva was much more important than sticking to the duties prescribed for the various castes. We see that the Śiva Bhaktas of the higher castes had no objection to eat with the Bhaktas of other castes, e.g., the Ādi Śaiva Brāhmaṇa Sundaramūrti ate with Śēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār. Sundarar also married a dancing girl Paravai Nācciyār. The hunter Kaṇṇappa and Nanda the Pulaiya were as much entitled to sanctity as the greatest of the Brahman Nāyanārs. Śaivism then ought to have become a sort of cosmopolitan creed. The question now arises as to whether it was such even from the earliest days of its development in South India. An answer can be furnished only if we discover some kind of chronological sequence

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in the accounts relating to the Nāyanārs of the *Periya Purāṇam*. We know something about the period when the greatest of the Nāyanārs, to wit Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar, lived. Some of their contemporaries were also among the 63 devotees of the *Periya Purāṇam*. Of the rest, we can come to only tentative conclusions; but yet, if some results can be obtained, it will be possible for us to detect the stages in the growth of Tamil Śaivism in the period of the Śaiva devotees (Nāyanārs).

The dates for Appar and Sambandar have been arrived at from facts obtained from inscriptions relating to the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas. Mahēndravarman I (son of Simha Viṣṇu) ruled roughly in the first quarter of the seventh century A.D. and bore the name of Guṇabhara. The *Periya Purāṇam* account of Appar is that he converted this king to Śaivism. This king also, it is alleged, persecuted the Jains, and constructed the temple known as Guṇadharavīccuram[1]. The name of the temple indicates that it was constructed by the Pallava who had that title, i.e., Mahēndra Varma I. So we get the first quarter of the seventh century as Appar's date. From the *Periya Purāṇam*, we also get the information that Appar was the contemporary of Sambandar, for Appar is said to have met Sambandar at Tiruppugalūr. Sambandar called

[1]Tirunāvukkaraśu Purāṇam, stanza, 146.

வீடறியாச்சமணர் மொழி பொய்யென்று மெய்யுணர்ந்த
சாடவனுந்திருவதிகை நகரின்கட் கண்ணுதற்குப்
பாடலி புத்திரத்தி லமண் பள்ளியொடு பாழிகளுங்
கூடவிடித்துக்கொணர்ந்து குணதர வீச்சரமெடுத்தான்.

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Tirunāvukkaraśu Nāyanār by the title 'Appar'[2] Later, these two went to several places together, e.g. Tiruvambar, Tirukkaḍavūr, etc.[3] Thus we get the date for these two Nāyanārs and their contemporaries. One of the contemporaries was the Pāṇḍya king Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāra Nāyanār. According to the account about him in *Periyapurāṇam,* he was converted to Śaivism by Saint Sambandar.[4] Because Sambandar is known from the *Periya Purāṇam* to have been the contemporary of Appar and because the *Periya Purāṇam* speaks of this Pāṇḍya as having won the battle of Nelvēli,[5] he is to be identified with king No. 4 of the Pāṇḍya genealogy reproduced below:

Palyāgaśāḷai Muduku̇ḍumi
Kaḷabhra interregnum

1. Kaḍuṅgōn
2. Adhirāja Māra Varman.
3. Śēḻiyan Śēndan.

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[2]Tirunāvukkaraśu Purāṇam, stanza, 234.

திருநாவுக்கரசரெதிர் சென்றிறைஞ்சச் சிரபுரத்துத்தெய்வ வாய்மைப்
பெருஞான சம்பந்தப் பிள்ளையாரெதிர் வணங்கி யப்பரேநீர்
வருநாளிற்றிருவாரூர் திகழ்பெருமை வகுத்துரைப் பீரென்றகூற
வருநாமத்தஞ் செழுத்தும் பயில்வாய்மை யவருமெதிரருளிச் செய்
[வார்.

[3]Ibid, stanzas 246, 248, etc.

[4]Stanza 2, Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār Purāṇam.

அந்நாளி லாளுடைய பிள்ளையாரருளாலே
தென்னாடு சிவம் பெருகச் செங்கோலுய்த்தறமளித்துச்
சொன்னம நெறி போற்றிச் சுரர்நகர்க்கோன்றனைக்கொண்ட
பொன்னாரமணிமார்பிற் புரவலனார் பொலிகின்றார்.

[5]Ibid. stanza 3; *Ep. Rep.* 1908, p. 66.

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4. Māra Varma, Arikēsari, Asama Sama, victor of Nelvēli.

Calculating backwards from the date (769-770 A.D.) of Neḍuñjaḍaiyan, the donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi plate (the 7th in the list), we may conclude that Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan must have lived in the middle of the seventh century A.D. If we now pick out from the *Periya Purāṇam*, the saints who were the contemporaries of Appar and Sambandar, we shall get the following :—(1) Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār, (2) Appūdi Aḍigaḷ whose meeting with Tirunāvukkaraśu is detailed in stanzas 10 ff. of Appūdi Aḍigaḷ Purāṇam: (3) Muruga Nāyanār, in whose house Appar lived for some time,[6] and who attained Mukti along with Sambandar,[7] (4) Tirunīlanakka Nāyanār, (5) Śiṟuttoṇḍar. (These two lived along with Appar and Sambandar in Muruga Nāyanār's house.[8] (6) Kuṅguliakkalaya Nāyanār who gave food to Appar.[9] (7) Maṅgayark-karaśi, the wife of Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār, (8) Kulacciṟai his minister, (9) Tirunīlakaṇṭapperumbāṇar who came to Shiyali to see Sambandar;[10] (10) Gaṇanāta Nāyanār who worshipped Sambandamūrti every day. Possibly he lived in the time between Sambandar and Sundarar.[11] Likewise Sundaramūrti Nāyanār had some contemporaries. Since it was Sundaramūrti that sang the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai* about the 63 Nāyanārs, we can infer that his date marks the later limit of the *Periya Purāṇa* saints. This saint is believed to

[6] Tirunāvukkaraśu Purāṇam, stanza 243.
[7] Muruga Nāyanār Purāṇam, stanza 13.
[8] Tirunāvukkaraśu Purāṇam, stanza 246.
[9] Tiru; Pur. Stanza 247.
[10] Tirunīlakaṇḍayāḷpāṇa Nāyanār Purāṇam, St. 10.
[11] Gaṇanāta Nāyanār Purāṇam, St. 5.

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have lived towards the close of the eighth century A.D. His contemporary saints were:—(1) Śēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār, who was Sundarar's intimate friend, (2) Narasiṅga Munaiyaraiyar, who brought him up;[12] (3) Ēyarkōnkalikkāmanāyanār whose stomach-ache was cured by Sundarar, whom he had hated before for having made god his messenger to Paravai Nācciyār;[13] (4) Perumiḻalaikkuṟumbanāyanār, who obtained all psychic powers by meditating upon Sundarar;[14] (5) Somāśi Māṟa Nāyanār who obtained Mukti by worshipping Sundarar;[15] (6) Śaḍaiya Nāyanār, the father of Sundaramūrti and (7) Iśaigñāniyār, the mother of Sundarar. (8) Mānakkañjāṟa Nāyanār whose daughter was to have married Ēyarkōn.

Thus we get about twenty Nāyanārs who were the contemporaries of the three great hymners. As for the rest we shall have to find out who were the predecessors of Appar and Sambandar and who lived after them and before Sundarar. Before proceeding to do this, let us examine the nature of the contemporaries of Appar and Sambandar so as to discover their religious views.

*Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār.* The chief events about him as detailed in the *Periya Purāṇam* are these:—(1) He was a convert to Jainism (St. 1). (2) He was converted to Śaivism by Sambandar (St. 2). (3) He defeated a northern king at Nelvēli. (4) His wife was a Cōḷa princess (St. 8). (5) After conversion he did all things to make Śaivism prosper in

[12] Taḍuttātkoṇḍa Pur. St. 5.
[13] Ēyarkōn. Pur. St. 8.
[14] Peru. Mil., St. 4 and 5.
[15] Somāśi Māṟa Nā. Pur. St. 4.

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the Tamil country (St. 9). (6) After a long reign he gained Śiva's world (St. 9).

As for his conversion, the account of Sambandar's life gives several details, one of which is that the Jains told the king that they could raise a fire in the camp of Sambandar through their powers. The king gave his consent to the Jains carrying out their design.[16] The story goes on that Maṅgayarkkaraśi, the queen, told Kulacciṟai, the minister that they should be prepared to lose their lives, should anything evil happen to Sambandar through the wickedness of the Jains.[17] The Jains, according to the account, could not succeed through their *Mantras* in setting fire to the residence of Sambandar and so they actually set fire to it.[18] Then the miracle happened. Sambandar's house was not affected because the fire left it to attack the Pāṇḍya. This was the consequence of a *'padigam'* sung by Sambandar on that occasion.[19] The *Padigam* itself alludes to this incident in every one of its ten songs;

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[16] Sambandar Pur. St. 688 and 689.

வந்த வந்தணன் றன்னைநாம் வலிசெய்துபோக்குஞ்
சிந்தை யன்றியச்சிறு மறையோனுறை மடத்தில்
வெந்தழற் படவிஞ்சை மந்திரத்தொழில் விளைத்தா
லிந்தநன்னகரிடத்தி ரானேகு மென்றி சைத்தார்.
ஆவதொன்றிதுவே யாகிலதனையே விரைந்து செய்யப்
போவதென்றவரைப்போக்கி......................... ......

[17] Ibid, St. 696.

மாணியார் தாமுமஞ்சி வஞ்சசப்புலைபர்தாங்க
ளீனமேபுரிய வல்லார் செய்வதென்னு மென்றெண்ணி
ஞான சம்பந்தர் தம்பானன்மை யல்லாத செய்ய
வூனம் வந்தடையில் யாமுமுயிர்துறந்தொழிவதென்றார்.

[18] Ibid, St. 700.

[19] Ibid. 704.

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the last two lines of each song relate to it.[20] Thus the story has, it appears, some historical foundation. The effect of this song was that the Pāṇḍya monarch was attacked by a disease, the chief symptom of which was a burning sensation all over the body.[21] The endeavours of the Jains, to alleviate the pain were ineffective.[22] The king got annoyed, and said that he would declare that religion, to be superior whose effect would be seen in the removal of his pain.[23] Later we have the mention of his disputations with the Jains which are also alluded to in a *Padigam* of his. In it he describes the nature of the Jains and also his disputation with them.[24] There is also another *Padigam*[25] where also the same incident of the

[20] Tēvāram:—Tiruvālavāy—Paṇ-Kauśikam.

பொய்யரா மமணர் கொளுவுஞ் சுடர்
பையவே சென்று பாண்டியற்காகவே

எத்தராமமணர் கொளுவுஞ் சுடர்
பத்திமன்றென்னன் பாண்டியற்காகவே

எக்கராமமணர் கொளுவுஞ்சுடர்
பக்கமே சென்று பாண்டியற்காகவே etc. etc.

[21] Sambandar Pur. St. 711.

[22] Ibid. St. 715.

[23] Ibid. St. 723.

[24] Sambandar. Tiruvālavāy, Paṇ-Kauśikam.

வேட்டு வேள்வி செய்பாவமண் கையரை
ஓட்டி வாது செயத்திருவுள்ளமே
பொய்த்தவன்றவவேடத்தராஞ்சமண்
சித்தரைபழிக்கத் திருவுள்ளமே;
சாக்கியப் பேயமண் .. ............... .....
தென்னர் கற்பழிக்கத் திருவுள்ளமே
ஓதி யோத்தறியா வமணாதரை
வாதில் வென்றழிக்கத் திருவுள்ளமே;
வீறிலாத்தவ மோட்டமண் வேடரைச்
சீறிவாது செயத்திரு வுள்ளமே

[25] Tiruvālavāy-Paṇ-Paḷambañjuram,

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defeat of the Jains in disputation is related. From these two songs of Sambandar, we are enabled to find out why the saint disliked the Jains, for he describes them. The reason for his hatred seems to have been their condemnation of the Vedas and the Vēdāṅgas. It is in the *Padigam* last mentioned that this reason is very clearly seen:—

வேத வேள்வியை நிந்தனை செய்துழல்
ஆதமில்லி யமணொடுதே ரரை

which means 'The *amaṇas* (Jains) and *thēras* (Buddhists) who condemn Vedic sacrifices'.

வைதிகத்தின் வழியொழுகாத

'those who do not follow the Vedic path'

மறை வழக்க மில்லாத மாபாவிகள்

i.e., "The sinners who do not follow the Vedic customs"

அறுத்த வங்க மாறாயின நீர்மையைக்
கறுத்த வாழமண் கையர்

i.e., "Those who opposed the righteousness of the six Vēdāṅgas", etc.

These allusions make clear two things:—(1) That the Jains went about condemning Vedic rituals and practices, and (2) Sambandar put an end to the Jain influence in the Pāṇḍya's court so that the Pāṇḍya king might do everything for spreading the cause of Śaivism in his country and probably also in the adjoining countries. The same spirit of hostility between Jainism and Śaivism is also evidenced by the story of Appar.

According to the *Periya Purāṇam* account, this saint was first a convert to Jainism,[26] the

[26] Tirunāvuk. St. 37.
கொல்லாமை மறைந்துறையு மமண் சமயங் குறுகுவார்

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'religion of non-killing'. He is also spoken of as having studied all the Jaina books in Pāṭaliputra,[27] (South Arcot District), and as having become one of the Jaina teachers. His new name was Dharmasēna.[28] The Purāṇa further narrates that he defeated the Buddhists in argument.[29] This shows that there was antagonism between Buddhism and Jainism. It was then that the saint had an attack of stomach-ache,[30] which could not be cured by the repetition of all the *Jaina Mantras.* Thus it is seen that the Jains were then adopting the practice of curing diseases by uttering *Mantras.* From the *Purāṇam,* it is also observable, that the treatment of diseases consisted in making the patient drink the water from the *Kamaṇḍala* which had been rendered efficacious by the repetition of Jaina *Mantras.*[31] Another thing to be done was to touch the various parts of the patient's body with peacock feathers.[32] These had no effect upon the saint. He then lost faith in Jainism, and came to his sister, a pious Śiva devotee, who gave him the sacred ashes and took him to the Śiva temple at Tiruvadigai Vīraṭṭānam.[33] There he acquired the power of singing hymns,[34] and when he had sung one of them (beginning with கூற்றாயினவாறு விலக்ககிலீர்) his disease left him. The burden of the song is that he should be relieved of his stomach-ache. In one place

[27] Ibid. St. 39.
[28] Ibid. St. 39.
[29] Ibid. St. 40.
[30] St. 49.
[31] St. 53.
[32] St. 53.
[33] St. 62.
[34] St. 69.

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he also alludes to his mistake in having remained a Jain.[35]

From the foregoing account, it is found that Tirunāvukkaraśu got convinced of the superiority of Śaivism because it cured him of his disease. Of course, he sincerely believed that Śiva cured him. We have already noticed that Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār was likewise converted because of the cure of his disease (the burning sensation). This shows that even intelligent people of the type of Tirunāvukkaraśu required proof by miracles to convince them of the superiority of one religion to another. It must be remembered that a person, who believes, because of miracles, cannot be regarded to have reached the highest degree of spiritual development; for, it will be impossible for him to believe in fundamental truths when miracles do not take place. However high his culture and piety may be, he is lower in the spiritual plane than one whose conviction does not depend upon miracles. The latter becomes convinced because of his inner experience and not because of external happenings, and therefore his faith in a personal or an impersonal god cannot be shaken whether anything explicable or inexplicable does or does not happen in the external world. The defect in the person whose belief rests on miracles is that even where miracles do happen he will not have

[35] தோற்றாதென் வயிற்றினகம் படியேகுடரோடு துடக்கிமுடக்கியிட
ஆற்றேனடியேன்..................

வஞ்சம்மிதுவொப்பது கண்டறியேன் வயிற்றோடு துடக்கிமுடக்கியிட
நஞ்சாகி வந்தென்னை நலிவதனை நணுகாமற்றுரந்து கரந்துமிடீர்
அஞ்சேலு மென்னீர்......................

முன்னம் மடியேனறி யாமையினான் முனிந்தென்னை நலிந்து முடக்கி
பின்னையடியேன் உமக்காளும் பட்டேன்................ [யிடப்

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the discrimination needed to sift out the true from the false; his mental state is one of ignorance about the ultimate, or the real cause, of the happenings which he witnesses. In the case of Neḍumāṟan and even of Appar, if the Jains could have cured the respective diseases, the conversion might not have taken place, and both of them might have continued to be Jains. Nor can it be said that the Jains would have found it impossible to perform spiritual cures, or even miracles, for miracles were not the exclusive monopoly of the Śaivas. The Bible gives ample evidence of the miracles displayed in the life of Jesus. The Buddhist scriptures likewise furnish us with numerous instances of Buddha's miracles. The Koran has miracles about the Prophet. If the contemporary Jains were unable to show miracles to Appar, Sambandar and Neḍumāṟan, we can only infer that they were not the true representatives of their religion. Hence if we are to infer that Appar and Neḍumāṟan, and several others whom we shall notice later were convinced of the superiority of Śaivism because of the miracles (and this is what the *Periya Purāṇam* compels us to infer), all that we can say is that these saints were great and noble and pure, but their spiritual development had not reached the final stage of perfection. That was the real reason for the intolerance they showed towards the rival creeds, their confounding the Śiva of the trinity with Śivam or Sat-cit-Ānandam (which point will be taken up later), and the undue importance they gave to such external forms as the sacred ashes.

The other point worthy of notice in the life of Appar is the conversion of the Pallava king which was

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due to his having witnessed four miracles. They were: (1) Appar was not killed though he was shut up in a lime-kiln for seven days;[36] (2) He did not die though he ate milk and rice mixed with poison;[37] (3) The elephant which was urged to kill him left him free and killed two Jains.[38] (4) He was not drowned when thrown into the sea tied to a huge stone.[39] In the last instance the stone became a float for him, and it took him to the temple of Tiruppādirippuliyūr (Cuddalore, N. T., in South Arcot District). The last miracle (throwing the saint into the sea) is referred to in one of Appar's songs by singing which he saved himself according to *Periya Purāṇam* account. It is the popular song beginning with சொற்றுணை வேதியன். The third line refers to the tying of the stone and throwing into the sea. It runs:—

கற்றுணைப் பூட்டியோர் கடலிற்பாய்ச்சினும்
நற்றுணை யாவது நமச்சிவாயவே.

The king then persecuted the Jains, destroyed their holy places and constructed the temple called Guṇadharavīccuram. Here also we see that the reason for conversion was the witnessing of miracles.

Yet, it is to be remembered that Appar developed in course of time, true knowledge. Several of his Tēvāram songs (which will be noticed later on) reveal the clear conception he had about the highest Vedāntic truths. Hence, so far as he was concerned, the miracles were helpful only in turning Appar's attention towards

[36] Tiru. Pur. St. 96
[37] Ibid. St. 105.
[38] Ibid. St. 116.
[39] Ibid. St. 127.

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Śaivism. Evidently, he made rapid spiritual progress as time passed on and before long, there came a stage when his faith did not depend upon miracles at all.

We may now proceed to discuss the lives of the minor contemporaries of Sambandar.[40] *Appūdi Aḍigaḷ* was a Brahman by caste who lived in Tiṅgaḷūr in the Cōḷa's dominions. He had heard of Tirunāvukkaraśu and had become so much fascinated with the story that he named every household article of his, including even weights and measures after that saint. He erected a number of water-pandals, planted many flower-gardens, and constructed many *maṭhas* (residences for holy men) and gave them all the name of Tirunāvukkaraśu. It chanced one day that Appar passed through Tiṅgaḷur, and when he rested himself in one of the *pandals* (sheds) erected by this devotee he found that his own name was written on it. He then felt a desire to see such a *bhakta* and went to the house of Appūdi Aḍigaḷ; and later on, when Appar was to be entertained by a feast, Appūdi Aḍigaḷ's son went to fetch a plantain leaf and then had the misfortune of being bitten by a snake. In that condition he returned with the leaf and succeeded in just keeping himself alive to hand over the leaf to his mother. The sorrow-stricken parents checked themselves in their grief lest the saint's (Appar's) meal should be delayed and hiding the corpse went out to invite Appar. But from the conversation that ensued, Appar was able to discover the death of the boy. Then Appar went to the corpse, sang

[40] The data on lives of the Saints are all taken from the Periya-Purāṇam. Detailed references to individual verses are therefore generally omitted.

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a song and brought it to life. The song begins with ஒன்று கொலாமவர் சிந்தை. The song itself does not contain any direct allusion to the incident.

In this account, though a miracle happens, it is not the reason for any conversion to Śaivism because Appūdi Aḍigaḷ was already a Śaiva devotee who practised the Śaiva virtues. Yet stanza 44 says that it was through his reverence to Appar that Appūdi Aḍigaḷ gained the grace of Śiva.[41] *Muruga Nāyanār* was another Brahman saint who was Sambandar's contemporary. There is nothing particularly noteworthy about this saint except that he was a pious Brahman who supplied flowers to the temple of Vardhamānēśvarar and that he was a friend of Sambandar. He was also one of those who witnessed the marriage of Sambandar on which occasion he gained entrance into Śiva's world. Probably the only reason that can be assigned to his being regarded as one of the 63 devotees was his presence on the occasion of Sambandar's marriage, which was also that of his departure from the world.[42]

*Tirunīlanakka Nāyanār* also was a Brahman. He was well versed in the Āgamas, and devoted his life to the daily Pūja of Śiva, and to the feeding of Śiva

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[41] இவ்வகை யரசின் பாத மேத்தியெப்பொருளு நாளு
மவ்வருந்தவர் பொற்றாளே யென வுணர்ந்தடைவார் செல்லுஞ்
செவ்விய நெறியதாகத் திருத்தில்லை மன்றுளாடு
நவ்வியங் கண்ணாள் பங்கர் நற்கழ லண்ணினாரே.

[42] This mention of Vardhamānesvara temple opens up an enquiry into when it could have come into existence. This, like many other temples of Śiva which have Sanskrit names, unmistakably points to a period posterior to that of the great Tēvāram hymners when Śaivism had taken deep root on South Indian soil, as a consequence of which many shrines were erected where *bhaktas* might worship Śiva. But nothing is definitey known about that period.

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*bhaktas*. But were the Āgamas known in the south at that time? From some references in the Tēvāram we must conclude that the Śiva Āgamas must have been prevalent in the south from very early times. For instance in Sambandar's *padigam* on Tirumayilāppūr (beginning with மட்டிட்ட), he describes the monthly festivals conducted in the Śiva temple, and this proves that the rules relating to such festivals must have been known.[43] Saint Nandan's longing to go to Cidambaram to see the Mārgaḷi Tiruvādirai is very well known; and Nandan lived far earlier than Sambandar himself. It is impossible to believe that there were no religious rules about the celebration of these festivals, and, since these rules constituted one section of the Śaiva Āgamas, we have to take it that the Āgamas must have become current in South India from the time that Śiva was worshipped in the South. We have noticed before that there were some among the Śangam poets who sang about Śiva. It was for the benefit of such saints that Śiva temples were constructed and Śiva festivals were conducted. If there was even one Śiva temple, there must have been one in charge of the worship to be conducted there daily, and he was bound to have a knowledge of the Śiva Āgama. This knowledge might have been confined to a small section of the people, but it could not have been entirely unknown. So there is nothing impossible in Tirunīlanakka Nāyanār being versed in the Śiva Āgamas.

[43] The festivals enumerated in the padigam are Aippaśi Ōṇam, Kārtigai, Mārgaḷi, Tiruvādirai, Taippūśam, Māśikkaḍalāṭṭu, Paṅguni Uttiram Aṣṭami, Poṟṟāppu, etc. These were surely very old festivals common to all Śiva temples.

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The *Purāṇam* account proceeds to relate that when he was one day performing the *pūja* to his Śiva image a spider fell upon it,[44] and the Saint's wife at once did what one would do when the spider fell upon a tender child, i.e., blew it away and spat on the place where it fell. The saint felt that this was an *unśāstraic* and that the image had thereby become impure, and so in his vexation asked her to separate herself from him. But in the night God Śiva appeared before him in his dream and showed the saint how his whole body, except where it had been spat upon, was blistered owing to the fall of the spider. This opened the eyes of the saint who now realised that *bhakti* was more important than a knowledge of the Śāstras. Later on, Sambandar came to his house along with Tirunīlakaṇṭhapperumbāṇar and the *Viṟali* or the songstress. Tirunīlanakka Nāyanār asked these two to sleep near the sacrificial pit (வேதிகை) of the house, and in the night the saint saw the fire of the pit blazing forth of its own accord. This proved to him again that *bhakti* was more important than even *hōmas* (fire) tended with Vedic mantras. Sambandar introduced the name of this saint in the *padigam* that he sang of Śiva at Śāttamaṅgai.[45] But the song does not contain any allusion to the incidents narrated herein.

From the foregoing account, we see that the saint did not understand what real *bhakti* was, and how much more important it was than a knowledge or observance

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[44]St. 11.

[45]The songs begins with திருமலர்க்கொன்றை quoted in a footnote on p. 325 of the Periya Purāṇam (Ārumuganāvalar, E. 1903).



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of the Śāstras till he witnessed the miracles. The fire rising of its own accord out of the sacrificial pit removed from his mind the notion that the Pāṇan and the Viṟali were inferior to the Brahmans because of their birth. The Pāṇan and the Viṟali belonged to castes, indigenous in the Tamil country who were not entitled to utter the Vedic mantras, or perform the *homa* or fire rituals. There lurked in the Brahman's mind the fear that he ought not to associate with them because they belonged to the lower castes. The miracle proved to him that they were purified by their *bhakti,* and so he could not be wrong in moving with them and even eating with them. It was this conviction of the purification by *bhakti* that made Śaivism a cosmopolitan creed. All true Śaivas believed that there should be no caste barriers among themselves. But we can well believe that such a view was unacceptable to the majority of Hindus who would regard Śaivism as a heretical religion, since it violated caste rules. That was the reason why the Āgamas, which had already remained in South India were not given a place in the orthodox religious literature of the land and were not studied by the orthodox section of the community, who contented themselves with mastering the Vedas, the Vēdāṅgas, the Upaniṣads and the Smṛtis but had nothing to do with the Āgamas. These last were not studied even by all the Śaivas. Many among the *Aḍiyārs* were not learned people. They were only believers in Śiva. Even among the 63 devotees, only a few had made a study of the Āgamas. The rest were Aḍiyārs or Toṇḍar (*bhaktas*) pure and simple. They

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were great only for their absolute self-surrender to God, and not for learning or philosophy.

*Śiruttoṇḍar*.—In the story of this saint, we realise the extent to which the Śaivas were prepared to go against Śāstraic rules for practising what they regarded as Śaiva virtues. According to the *Periya Purāṇam* he was a *Mahā Mātra* Brahman. In other words, he was a Brahman who served as a Mahā Mātra, or commander-in-chief. This seems the only explanation, for there does not seem to have existed at any time a class of Brahmans having that peculiar name. The expression '*Mātra kula*' implies that the office was hereditary. Śiruttoṇḍa was well versed in the science of *Āyur Veda* (medicine) and also in all the 'northern sciences' i.e., scientific works in Sanskrit. He was also one who placed his faith in the God (Śiva) who spurned Yama. He won several victories for his king, the most famous of which was his destruction of Vātāpi. This gives us the clue to the history of his time, for the city was the capital of Pulakēsin II, the famous monarch who had defeated Harṣa Vardhana. The victory of Śiruttoṇḍar (or of Parañjōti as he was then known) over Pulakēsin II was in the year 642 A.D. The king was immensely pleased, but when his ministers told him that the commander-in-chief was a Śiva Bhakta, he regretted that he had exposed in the battle-field such a holy person who was a worshipper of his own patron deity (Śiva), and so gave him presents and permitted him to retire from service. The king was evidently Pallava Narasimha Varman, the son of Mahēndra Varman I, who had been converted

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to Śaivism by Appar. Then the saint went back to his own village, Tiruccengāṭṭaṅguḍi, and began worshipping Śiva in the temple of Gaṇapatīccaram. This name Gaṇapatīccaram suggests unmistakably that the worship of Gaṇapati was known in the Tamil country at that time. This is also proved by a reference to Gaṇapati described as the (sacred) elephant by Appar in one of his Tēvāram hymns beginning with

சுண்ணவெண் சந்தனச்சாந்தும்.

The fact that there are only a few references to Gaṇapati in early Tamil literature, however, argues in favour of the view that Gaṇapati worship was not a wide-spread cult. It was when Śiṟuttoṇḍar was staying there, practising the virtue of giving food to all *Śiva Yōgis* every day and taking food only after they had eaten, that God Śiva appeared as one of the devotees of Śiva in his terrible form of Bhairava. From the description in the *Periya Purāṇam,* we find that the Bhairava Yōgi had braided hair, a garland of *'Tumbai'* flowers, sacred ashes on the forehead and a dot upon it, the ear-ring called the *tōḍu* in the ears, a neck-lace of crystal beads, a *Kañcukam* (a kind of vest), bangles on the arms and the legs, a begging-bowl in the left hand, a trident and a small drum (*Ḍamaruka*) in the right hand. This Bhairava Yogi came to Śiṟuttoṇḍar's house where the Toṇḍar's wife offered him hospitality, which was refused, because the husband was away, having gone in search of Śiva Yōgis who were to be fed that day. Then he promised to remain under the Ātti tree in the temple. The Toṇḍar returned without succeeding in his mission and learning of the new arrival hurried to fetch the Bhairava Yōgi. The Yōgi

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consented to take food, but made the exacting condition that the food should consist of child's meat and that the child itself should be five years old, the only son of his parents who ought to cut him up willingly and cheerfully. The condition was agreed to and the banquet was served. Then the Yōgi asked the father also to sit along with him, and even when that was acceded to, he asked him to go and fetch his son, who had already been thus sacrificed. The poor Śiṟuttoṇḍar obeyed, and when he went out and called his son, the son came running towards him. When both went in, the Yōgi and the dish had vanished. Then Śiva appeared before him with his consort, with Subrahmaṇya and all the *Dēvas.*

Sambandar has sung the praise of Śiṟuttoṇḍar in two of his *padigams* beginning respectively with நறைகொண்ட மலர்தூவி and பைங்கோட்டு. In neither of them do we find any reference to this incident. Hence, one is left in doubt as to whether the tale is to be believed or not. But we can safely infer from the story that there were some in the age of the *Periya Purāṇam* who were prepared to believe that God tested pious devotees by making unreasonable demands upon them, and that the fact that demands were unreasonable should not shake their faith in Him.

Another point of importance in the story is that the people of the south knew of that form of Śaivism believed in by the Bhairava Yōgis. It implies that such Yōgis were sometimes moving about in the Southern country also. That they were generally men of the north is seen from the statement of this Bhairava ascetic in the *Periya Purāṇam* that he was a northerner

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உத்தராபதியோம்.[46] As for the question when this practice of Śiva Yōgis moving throughout the length and breadth of India began, we can only say that it must have come into vogue in pre-historic times, for we see holy places devoted to the worship of Śiva in South India mentioned in the Mahābhārata.

Again, the question arises how could a Brahman willingly offer meat to a Bhairava Yōgi who demanded it, and also take his food with him. Was it an exception sanctioned by the exceptional circumstances of the case, or was it a practice among some Brahmans at least to take meat? We cannot say whether Śiṟuttoṇḍar was a flesh-eater or not, but we have unmistakable evidence of some Brahmans of South India eating flesh. For instance, Kapilar admits that fact in one of the songs of Puṟam. If Śiṟuṭṭoṇḍar was descended from Northern Brahmans, it was just possible that he was also a meat-eater; for the Gauḍa Brahmins of the North are not strict vegetarians even at the present day. For the purposes of Śaivism as it was prevalent during the days of the Tiruttoṇḍar it was immaterial whether one was a vegetarian or not. Kaṇṇappar was a hunter who offered pork and venison to God Śiva. All that they wanted was an abiding faith in Śiva and respect for Śiva Bhaktas. They were not disbelievers in the Vedas and the Śāstras. On the other hand, they condemned the Jains and Buddhists for their disbelief. But they gave a higher place to *Bhakti*.

*Kuṅgiliyak-kalaiya-nāyanār* was a Brahman who took upon himself the task of supplying incense to the

[46] St. 46.

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god in the temple of Tirukkaḍavūr. He lost all his wealth and was forced to sell one after another all his belongings to feed his family. The time came when there was nothing left in the household, and then his wife gave him her *'tāli'* asking him to buy rice. The pious husband took it and instead of bringing rice, he bought incense and took it to the temple. That night the god blessed the wife with riches and asked the *Nāyanār* to go home and have his meal. He then came to know of the cause of the sudden opulence, and from then he began the practice of feeding Śaiva devotees. One day he heard that the king was unable, in spite of all his resources, to make erect the Śiva *Liṅgam* in the temple of Tiruppanandāḷ, which had for some unknown reason begun to lean on one side; and then he took the rope (which was attached to the *Liṅgam*) and tying it round his own neck pulled the *Liṅgam* so as to make it perpendicular. The *Liṅgam* stood upright, and everybody had now proof of the intensity of the Nāyanār's bhakti. It was afterwards that Appar and Sambandar came to his house at Tirukkaḍavūr where he continued to feed Śaiva devotees till he entered Śiva's world.

In the foregoing story, we have the case of a Brahman, who apparently was not learned either in the Vedas or the Āgamas, but who was only a true lover of god. Sundaramūrti who wrote the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai* did not know the real name of this Bhakta but called him 'Kalaiyar' or the person who held in his hand the Kalaśa or pot—presumably the incense pot:

கடவூரிற் கலயன் றன்னடியார்க்கு மடியேன்.

This name has been copied by Śēkkiḻār, the author of

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the *Periya Purāṇam*. At the present day, we notice only men of the *Paṇḍāram* class doing this office, and in fact he is a very familiar sight in all important Śiva temples. The fact of the Nāyanār burning incense in his pot shows that there must have been some among the higher classes who devoted themselves to such services (of course out of love) as would be done by men of other castes who would not have the qualifications for doing anything better, such as chanting the *mantras,* or taking part in the *abhiṣēkas*. It is also clear that in the opinion of a Śaiva no service to god was high or low in itself, and that the real test of the Bhakta consisted in two things—firstly the determination to carry it through in spite of all obstacles, and secondly the doing of the thing without expectation of any return. These were the outstanding traits in the life of this saint that made his contemporaries and successors regard him as a saint fit to be included among the sixty-three.

Incidentally, it may also be seen from the above story that the *liṅga* worship had become well established in the land; and whenever anything went wrong with the temple *liṅga,* monarchs were doing their best to mend matters. We have no evidence as to who built the temple of Tiruppanandāḷ, or the time when the *liṅga* was established there; but we notice the anxiety of the Cōḷa king to see that the *liṅga* stood erect in the temple. Judging from the facts of the case, we may infer that the Cōḷa king was Neḍumāṟan's father-in-law, the father of Maṅgayarkkaraśiyār (another saint), and though, as is found from history, he was not in very

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flourishing circumstances, he supplied elephants, for this philanthropic work.

*Maṅgayarkkaraśiyār* and *Kulacciṟaināyanār* were the wife and the minister respectively of the Pāṇḍya Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār. These two are alluded to by Sambandar in one of his *padigams*. It begins with மங்கையர்க்கரசி. The queen is referred to as the Cōḷa's daughter "வளவர்கோன் பாவை". Her worship of Śiva is also mentioned:—

மங்கையர்க்கரசி வளவர்கோன் பாவைவரிவளைக்கைம் மடமானி
பங்கயச்செல்வி பாண்டிமாதேவி பணிசெய்து நாடொறும்பரவப்
பொங்கழலுருவன் பூதநாயகனால் வேதமும் பொருள்களுமருளி

Her work in spreading the cause of Śiva (the sacred ashes) is also spoken of:—

செந்துவர் வாயாள் சேலனகண்ணாள் சிவன்றிரு நீற்றினை வளர்க்கும், பந்தணை விரலாள் பாண்டிமாதேவி.

We cannot say whether Sambandar evidences only his courtesy, or expresses the real fact, when he speaks of the Cōḷa as a prosperous ruler. He says:—

மண்ணெலாம் திகழ் மன்னனாய் மன்னு
மணிமுடிச் சோழன்றன் மகளாம்

In the same *padigam* the virtues of Kulacciṟai are also extolled. He is spoken of as one who delighted in falling at the feet of the Aḍiyārs:—

வெற்றவேயடியாரடிமிசை வீழுப்விருப்பினன்.

The king is also described as a Śiva Bhakta:—

வெள்ளைநீறணியும் கொற்றவன்.

From one line in the *padigam*, it is seen that Śiva devotees were in the habit of moving about either singly



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or in groups, for Kulaccirai is described as prostrating before them whether they came alone or in numbers:—

கணங்களாய் வரினுந்தமியராய் வரினுமடியவர் தங்களைக்கண்டால்
குணங்கொடு பணியுங்குலச்சிறை.

We have also proof from the same poem of the temples being not petty edifices but huge structures with towers:—

குலச்சிறை குலாவுங்கோபுரஞ் சூழ்மணிக்கோயில்.

The Śiva devotees themselves who were thus welcomed by Kulaccirai went about praising the virtues of the minister saint:—

தொண்டராயுள்ளார்திசைதிசைதோறுந்தொழுது தன்குணத்
திணைக் குலாவக், கண்டு நாடொறு மின்புறுகின்ற குலச்சிறை.

There is another *padigam* by Sambandar which is directly addressed to Maṅgayarkkaraśi where he says that, in spite of his youth, he would win a victory over the Jains because he had Śiva (Ālavāyār) on his side. This *padigam* begins thus:—

மானினேர் விழிமாதராய் வழுதிக்குமா பெருந்தேவிகேள்
பானல்வாயொரு பாலனீங்கிவ னென்றுநீ பரிவெய்திடேல்
ஆனமாமலை யாதியாயவிடங்களிற் பலவல்லல் சேர்
ஈனர்கட்கெளி யேனலேன்றிரு வாலவாயரனிற்கவே

The third line has a reference to the practice of Jains dwelling in the caves of Ānamalai (near Madura) and other places. Verse 2 alludes to the aggressive manner in which the Jains were roving about like wild elephants. At the sight of them ordinarily people versed in the *Āgamas* and *Mantras* stepped aside in fear:—

ஆகமத்தொடு மந்திரங்கள மைந்த சங்கத பங்கமாப்
பாகதத் தொடிரைத்துரைத்த சனங்கள் வெட்குறுபக்கமா

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மாகதக்கரி போற்றிரிந்து புரிந்து நின்றுணு மாசுசேர்
ஆகதர்க் கெளியேன லேன் ........................

In verse 3 of the *padigam* we have an account of the nature of Jaina disputation. They seem to have employed their skill in repeating much poetry for winning victories in argument:—

அத்தகு பொருளுண்டு மில்லையுமென்று நின்றவர்க்கச்சமா
ஒத்தொவ்வாமை மொழிந்து வாதிலழிந்தெழுந்த கவிப்பெயர்ச்
சத்திரத்தின் மடிந்தொடிந்து சனங்கள் வெட்குற நக்கமே
சித்திரர்க்கெளியேனலேன்............................

which means "I am not afraid of the Jains who appear in curious garbs and also naked, and by the arrow of their poetry defeat people in argument and force them to admit the Jaina view that the real thing exists and yet does not exist". The next verse mentions the characteristic Jaina names prevalent at that time, such as, Śandu Sēna, Indu Sēna, Dharma Sēna, Kanda Sēna, Kanaka Sēna. Sambandar there mentions that these people had no knowledge of either Sanskrit or of Tamil literature:

ஆரியத்தொடு செந்தமிழ்ப் பயனறிகிலா அந்தர்கள்.

Verse 6 also gives some Jaina names ending in Nandi. Thus we find that Sēna and Nandi were two of the chief titles of the Jains. The succeeding verses also indicate the contempt that Sambandar had towards the Jains.

*Tirunīlakaṇṭha Yāḻpāṇar* : The word Pāṇar explains that he belonged to that caste. We gather that he was accustomed to play on his musical instrument, the *Yāḻ*, the songs of praise sung in honour of Śiva. After having visited the several shrines in the Cōḷa country, he went to Madura and played on his instrument the

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songs relating to Śokkanātha (Śiva) of Madura. He stood at the door doing that. But god Śokkanātha appeared in the dreams of the Śiva Aḍiyārs, and called upon them to bring this musician before His sacred presence. When the musician went inside the temple and went on playing, a voice was heard in the air that the instrument would be destroyed if placed on the wet floor and so a gold seat ought to be supplied. This was also done. Then he went to Tiruvārūr and sang there. God Śiva was pleased and opened out a gate in the north through which he could get in and worship. He stayed in that town for a long time and afterwards he went to Shiyāḻi the birth place of Sambandar, where he prostrated before that saint, and began to stay permanently with him. Ultimately he entered Śiva's world along with Sambandar. From the *Peṛiya Purāṇam* account about Sambandar, we find that on one occasion this musician was unable to play on his instrument a song composed by Sambandar,[47] and then the *Pāṇar* was about to break his *Yāḻ* to pieces. But Sambandar prevented him from doing it, and also did him the honour of singing about him in a *padigam* about Madura. It appears in the *padigam* beginning with ஆல நீழலுகந்ததிரு and the special reference appears in stanza 6: தாரமுய்த்தது பாணர்க்கருளோடே.

From this account about the contemporaries of Appar and Sambandar, we are enabled to gain an idea of the religious condition of the country at that time, and of the character of the Śiva *Aḍiyārs* themselves.

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[47] The song begins with
மாதர்மடப்பிடியும் மடவன்னமும்.
and is about the god at Tiruttarmapuram.

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As was pointed out above, there was a feeling of hostility between the Jains and the Śaivas, and also between the Jains and the Buddhists. From Sambandar's *padigam* beginning with மானினேர் விழி மாதராய் we can gather that the Jains were aggressive people who excelled in controversies by quoting the scriptures, who frightened people into submission by their bullying spirit and who exploited the credulity of the people by effecting cures and also by their pretended control of evil spirits. We cannot however help remembering that it was a Śaiva that gives us this account, and so there may be another side to the picture. Yet, from the fact that the Jains set fire to Sambandar's camp, a fact alluded to by that devotee, we can perceive that the desire to excel the Śaivas was present in the minds of the Jains of that period. One thing is certain. Some kings were Jains and had Jains by their side. The victory of Appar and Sambandar over the Jains resulted in the expulsion of Jains from the royal courts and the triumph of Śaivism. This means that some time before the appearance of Appar and Sambandar, Jainism had made rapid strides in the land. The fact that some kings patronised that religion and that Jainism was intolerant of Śaivism and also of Vedic Brahmanism are sufficient to render futile the argument that Jainism and Buddhism were not after all quite different from Hinduism and so should not be regarded as rival creeds. Whatever might have been the common features in all these religions, those who took up the championship of each one of them felt that they had to make efforts to keep down the rest. This applies even

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as between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. For we notice that in every one of the 383 *padigams* of Sambandar, we have one stanza (usually the 9th) proclaiming the superiority of Śiva to Brahma and Viṣṇu, and another (usually stanza 10) which has some words of abuse for the Buddhists and the Jains. Recognising this fact, we shall have to find an explanation for the growth of this spirit of rivalry. We know that during the period of the Śangam literature, no such tendency was noticeable.

It is probable that a few persons, here and there, like the author of the *Maṇimēkalai* had their own pet views about the inherent superiority of their own doctrines, but they could not have had a large following. As time advanced, the differences became more marked. Each religion had its own votaries who were convinced that their own form of religion was superior to the rest. This must have happened after the time of the Cōḷa king Kō-ccengaṇ, (whose name finds a place in Śangam literature, and who must have lived some time after Śēran Śenguṭṭuvan), who is claimed equally by the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇavas as their champion. "The Śaivas claimed him among the Aḍiyārs, while the Vaiṣṇavas claim him equally among their benefactors. He was a great temple-builder and among these temples are mentioned both Śiva and Viṣṇu shrines".[48] Thus the intolerance must have developed in the interval of time between Kō-ccengaṇ and Appar or Sambandar. Many of the Aḍiyārs in the *Periya Purāṇam* must have lived

[48] Dr. S. K. Aiyangar; Ancient India, p. 96.

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during that period and we shall notice later, how very sectarian and bigoted they are represented to have been. The bigotry of one sect must have reacted upon the other, and among a small uncultured section of the people there might have prevailed a notion that this very bigotry was due to, and proof of, intense devotion to god, and therefore was to be extolled as a virtue. Unless we interpret the *Periya Purāṇam* account in this fashion we cannot understand how people like Eripatta Nāyanār and Kaḻaṟccinga Nāyanār could be entitled to reverence and sainthood. The former killed a number of people because a flower basket was upset by a mad elephant, and the latter cut off the nose of a queen who smelt a flower intended for the worship of Śiva.

If we now take up for investigation the other Aḍiyārs we shall discover that each one of them had his own peculiar Śaiva virtue which entitled him to sanctity. Picking out such Śaiva virtues, we shall be enabled to understand what were regarded as the qualifications of Śiva Bhaktas.

*Tirunīlakaṇṭha Nāyanār* was a potter of Cidambaram, who one day enjoyed the company of a dancing girl and who was for that reason forbidden by his wife to touch her. When he paid no heed to her words, she said 'You should not touch us in the name of Tirunīlakaṇṭham'. The potter had such reverence for this name of God Śiva that he resolved not to touch her nor any other woman. Yet the husband and the wife lived very piously and this secret between them was not known to the people of the neighbourhood. They grew

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to a very old age and Śiva loved the potter for his genuine *bhakti,* and for the purpose of making all know how holy a person he was, came to their house in the form of a Śiva Yōgi. The *Yōgi* entrusted the potter with a pot and requested him to take special care of it, until he came and asked for it. The potter agreed and several days later, the *Yōgi* appeared again and asked for the pot. The potter could not find it in the place where he had kept it, and then an altercation ensued. The *Yōgi* would not be satisfied with any other pot even if it were one of gold. Then the potter and the *Yōgi* went to the presence of the Brahmans who formed the court, as it were, and the *Yōgi* said he would be satisfied if the potter would take hold of his wife, bathe in the sacred tank and swear that he was guiltless. The difficulty arose now since the potter could not touch her according to his vow. So he confessed his past transgression and finally consented to enter into the tank with his wife. Of course he did not touch her; but each one of them cought hold of one end of a bamboo stick. Both bathed and when they rose up from the water the miracle had happened. They had grown several years younger. Śiva also appeared in his usual form before them. Then everyone realised the sanctity of the potter who became henceforth the saint called Tirunīlakaṇṭha Nāyanār.

In this story, we notice that the reason for the saint's vow of continence was his reverence for the name of Tirunīlakaṇṭhan or Śiva. Hence the outstanding feature in his character was great attachment to the name of Śiva. From the details of the story we find that he was one of those who served Śiva *Yōgis*

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when they appeared and did them the services they required; for, it was the service of keeping the *Yōgi's* pot safe that led to his confession of his past sin and to the other incidents. This Śaiva virtue i.e. service to Śiva *Yōgis* is included in the virtues constituting the *Sādhana* called 'Caryā' by the Śaivas. According to the Supakṣam of Śivagñāna Siddhiyār, which may be taken to state correctly the present-day Śaiva Siddhānta doctrine, the *Sādhanas* or practices enabling one to attain *Muktipada* or liberation through Śiva are *Cariyai, Kriyai, Yōga* and *Gñāna.*[49] Of these *Cariyai* is spoken of also as *Dāsa Mārga,* and it consists of cleaning the temple premises, making garlands of flowers, praising and feeding Śiva devotees, lighting the temple lamps, planting flower gardens, and serving Śiva *Yōgis* and doing what they want should be done.[50]

Other Aḍiyārs who gained the presence of Śiva by adopting the *Śādhana* of Cariyai are the following:—

*Iyaṟpagai Nāyanār* was a Vaiśya belonging to the town of *Puhār* or Kāvērippūmpaṭṭinam. He was

[49]Sūtram 8, Adhikaraṇam 2, St. 18.

[50]*ibid.* St. 19.

தாதமார்க்கஞ்சாற்றிற் சங்கரன்றன் கோயிற்
றலமலகிட்டிலகு திருமெழுக்குஞ் சாத்திப்
போதுகளுங்கொய்து பூந்தார் மாலைக்கண்ணி
புனிதற்குப் பலசமைத்துப்புகழ்ந்து பாடித்
தீதிறிருவிளக்கிட்டுத்திரு நந்தவனமுஞ்
செய்துதிருவேடங்கண் டாலடியேன் செய்வ
தியாது டணியீரென்று டணிந்தவர்தம் பணியு
மியற்றுவதிச்சரியை செய்வோரீசனுலகிருப்பார்.



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observing the vow of giving everything that Śiva *Yōgis* wanted. It was this vow of his that led him to do a thing which ordinary people would not do, i.e., giving away his wife to Śiva who appeared in the garb of a Brahman Śiva devotee. In this connection it is interesting to note that this particular Śiva devotee came in the garb of a libertine (தூர்த்தவேடம்). So we see that the faith of the Śiva worshippers was such that they would not mind people coming even in objectionable forms provided they numbered themselves among Śiva ascetics. When Iyaṟpagai gave his wife, his relations took objection to what he did and went to the length of even fighting with him. But when he was escorting this pseudo *Yōgi* into the woods, the latter disappeared to reappear in his real form, i.e. that of Śiva on the sacred Bull. This saint's *caryā* consisted in his doing whatever Śiva Yōgis wanted to do.

*Iḷaiyānkuḍi Māṟa Nāyanār* was another such devotee. His virtue consisted in offering food to Śiva Bhaktas. He lost all wealth in doing it but still continued his work to the best of his ability. Śiva appeared before him one rainy night in the form of a Śiva Bhakta, and though the Nāyanār had nothing to offer, he went out and picked up the corn that had already been sown in the field, and gathering herbs in his backyard he cooked food using his bamboo rafters as fuel. Śiva showed him His real form and took him into His world. His virtue is also included in *Cariyai.*

In the story of *Meypporuḷ Nāyanār,* we find that the saint was prepared to be killed by an old enemy of his because the latter had assumed the garb of a Śiva

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Bhakta. Even this is part of *Cariyai* for the stanza referred to above says—

"If the form of a holy man was seen, the devotee must prostrate and ask what service he is to render".

The virtue of worshipping Śiva Bhaktas was regarded even superior to the worship of Śiva himself. This is illustrated in the *Periya Purāṇam* account about Viṟalmiṇḍa Nāyanār. The story is that he disapproved of Sundaramūrti Nāyanār worshipping God before worshipping the Śiva devotees. The only thing that Viṟalmiṇḍa Nāyanār did was the worship of Śiva devotees.

*Amar-nīti-Nāyanār* was a Vaiśya who gave food and clothing to the worshippers of Śiva when they came to witness the celebrations in the temple of Tirunallūr. Śiva appeared before him in the garb of a *Brahmacāri*, and asked him to take care of a *Kaupīn* (loin-cloth), and return it to him dry when he returned from his bath. The *Kaupīn* was mysteriously lost and an altercation ensued. The Nāyanār was prepared to give everything in return for the lost *Kaupīn* but when the *Brahmacāri* insisted upon an equal weight of articles being given in exchange and offered another similar *Kaupīn* for weighment, it was found that everything that the Nāyanār possessed did not have the weight of the *Kaupīn*. Therefore, he, his wife and son ascended the scalepan of the balance so as to make up the deficiency in weight and then the miracle happened. The scales were equal. Thus he was enabled to enter into Śiva's world with his whole family. In this story

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also, we find that because of the Nāyanār's *sādhana* of *cariyai,* he gained Śiva's presence.

It is when we come to the story of *Eripatta Nāyanār* that we see that even bigotry was not regarded as a vice. This Nāyanār was in the habit of throwing his axe upon any one who prevented good works from being done in the worship of Śiva. One Śivakāmi Āṇḍār was usually gathering flowers for the worship of the God in the temple of Paśupati at Karūr. King Pugaḻ Cōḻa's elephant Paṭṭavardhanam destroyed the flowers in the possession of Śivakāmi Āṇḍār and then Eripatta Nāyanār came and killed the elephant and the five men who were in charge of it. The news reached the king who started with an army to avenge the death of the royal elephant, but when he approached the presence of this saint he felt that his men ought to have been in the wrong and after enquiring into the case, he gave up his sword to Eripatta Nāyanār and requested that he might himself be killed. The latter took the sword and because of his admiration of the King's *bhakti* he began to kill himself. Then God appeared and saved both and also the elephant with the five people who were lying dead.

In this story the work done by the saint was not *Cariyai,* but was only connected with it in an indirect way. We are not told that Śiva-kāmi Āṇḍār had a vision of Śiva. Nor was he one of the 63 *Aḍiyārs.* The inference we have therefore to make is that at the time the event happened, the prevailing feeling was

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that anything could be done with impunity provided it was in furtherance of the cause of Śiva worship. The almost brutal behaviour of Eripatta Nāyanār seems to indicate that Śiva Bhaktas were not much concerned with Śiva doctrines or Śaiva philosophy. They attached the utmost importance to Śiva worship however much it was opposed to the ordinary canons of right and wrong. We may perhaps be right in inferring that such a frame of mind would have been tolerated only by those who, in spite of the great intensity of devotion, were not very enlightened. The bigot cannot but be regarded as an ignorant person, for he does not have the wisdom or equanimity needed to look at the other side of the question. After all, the path of Bhakti, as is now well known, is intended as an aid in conquering desire (*Rāga*) and hate (*Dvēṣa*), which is indispensable for *Citta Śuddhi* or the purification of the mind without which knowledge of the real truth would be impossible. So, we cannot be wrong in regarding that Eripatta Nāyanār was one who had not yet conquered *Dvēṣa,* though his *Dvēṣa* was righteous indignation. He had a high regard for the externals of Śiva worship, such as picking flowers, etc., and was prepared to do anything right or wrong to preserve these outward forms. Of the inward discipline of a life of true religion, this Nāyanār evidently had no idea.

Another who similarly attached great importance to external forms was *Ēnādi Nāyanār.* He belonged to the caste of Śāṇār (toddy-drawers), "Īḻakkulaccāṉṟār Ēnādi Nāyanār."

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The word Īḷakkulam may be taken to be the equivalent of the modern term Īḷava Kulam indicating the caste of the Malabar Īḷavas or toddy drawers.[51] As for the native place of the Saint Ēnādi Nāyanār, it is spoken of in the *Periya Purāṇam* as 'Eyil-mūdūr, Eyinanūr, or the ancient walled city of Eyinan'. And the first stanza of the *Periya Purāṇam* relating to him states distinctly that it was in the 'Cōḷa Nāḍ'. According to the story, the saint was one who taught princes the science of wielding the sword. There was another of the same profession as Atiśūran, who became envious of the increasing prosperity of Ēnādi Nātan and so fought with him. Being defeated he went away to reappear with sacred ashes on his forehead. But he hid the sacred ashes with the helmet. The saint went to fight with him but when he saw the ashes, he allowed himself to be killed. Śiva appeared before him when he fell dead and took him into His Presence.

It is when we come to the story of *Kaṇṇappa Nāyanār* that we get some details about the spread of Śaivism in early times and also about the contemporary notions about Śiva Bhakti.

[51] They might have been settlers in the Tamil country coming from the island of Īḷam or Ceylon. These Īḷavas must have been worshippers of Śiva (and probably also of Viṣṇu) as the present names of many members of that caste show. Two of the most common Īḷava names are Kaṇḍan and Kōran. The former is a corruption of Nīlakaṇṭhan and the latter of Aghōra, both names of Śiva. Another familiar Īḷava name is *Cāttāmi*, the proper form of which is Sahasranāmi, usually denoting Śiva of the thousand names. The fact that these names have come down from time immemorial shows that Śaivism has been in the land from very ancient times. If these Īḷavas came from Ceylon, it is possible that Śaivism must have prevailed in Ceylon before some of these migrated to the Tamil country. Rāvaṇa, the great king of Ceylon, was himself one of the great devotees of Śiva.

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Nāgan was the king of hunters at Uḍuppūr in Pottāppi Nāḍ. His wife was Tattai. She is spoken of as belonging to the caste of Maṛavar. They had no children and so they offered fowls and peacocks at the temple of *Muruga*, the god of the jungle. Through that God's blessing was born Tiṇṇan. He was well brought up according to the hunter customs. When the boy grew up he was made the ruler of the hunters by Nāgan. From then, he went about hunting in various directions. One day when he was out hunting, a pig escaped from its net and ran away very swiftly and Tiṇṇan pursued it. He was followed only by two hunters Nāṇan and Kāḍan. The animal was finally killed. The hunters then felt thirsty and then Nāṇan told the others that close by they could drink water from the Ponmukari river. They started towards it when Nāṇan again said that there, in the Kāḷahasti hill there was God Kuḍumittēva or the 'god with the tuft'.[52] Evidently that was the way in which Śiva with the braid of hair was popularly known in that neighbourhood. They approached the river and then Kāḍan made fire (by churning the fire-stick) when the other two climbed the hill. It was then midday. There was from that moment onwards a perceptible change in Tiṇṇan. He then came into the presence of God Śiva, i.e., the image in the temple there, and became himself an embodiment of love.[53] It is clear from the account that the

[52] Cf. the name Śikhānātha of the god in Kuḍumiyāmalai, (Pudukotah).

[53] St. 104.

திங்கள் சேர் சடையார் தம்மைச் சென்றவர் காணுமுன்னே
யங்கணர் கருணை கூர்ந்த வருட்டிரு நோக்க மெய்தித்
தங்கிய பவத்தின் முன்னைச் சார்புவிட் டகல நீங்கிப்
பொங்கிய வொளி யினீழற் பொருவிலன் புருவ மானார்.

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author of the *Periya Purāṇam* wants to show the transformation that was effected in Tiṇṇan when he came before Śiva's image. He was till then a man of cruel deeds taking delight in hunting and killing. It was this change in him that made him think about the god there with great tenderness and affection. What he did immediately afterwards is detailed in the succeeding stanzas. He ran towards the image, embraced it and kissed it.[54] He felt inexpressibly glad that he had come into possession of the God.[55] Then he felt sorrow-striken at the thought that the god was exposing himself to the dangers of the jungle like the hunters born in the Maṟava race.[56] Here we have the expression of one of the finest of feelings. The hunter begins to love the god just as a mother would love her son and feels concerned for the welfare of the god. It is absolutely selfless love. Even in the highest forms of *Bhakti*, the devotee, ordinarily prays for something for his own benefit, either material prosperity, or relief from suffering or spiritual illumination. Even Appar asks in several songs for the removal of his disease or difficulties. Tiṇṇan asks for nothing of the kind. He is totally oblivious of his own physical, mental or spiritual

[54] St. 105.

மோகமா யோடிச்சென்றார் தழுவினார் மோந்து நின்றார்.

[55] St. 106.

அடியனேற் கிவர்தாமிங்கே யகப்பட்டாரச்சோவென்று
படியிலாப் பரிவு தானோர் படிவமாம் பரிசுதோன்ற

[56] St. 107.

வெம்மறக் குலத்து வந்த வேட்டுவச் சாதியார்போற்
கைம் மலைகரடி வேங்கை யரிதிரி கானந்தன்னி
லும்முடன் றுணையா யுள்ளாரொருவருமின்றிக்கெட்டே
னிம்மலைத் தனியே நீரிங்கிருப்பதே யென்று நைந்தார்.

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needs. All his thoughts are centred upon the safety of the Being there. It was this noble emotion that he evidenced in his later deeds, and that won for him the highest place capable of being reached by Śiva worshippers—a position of equality with God Śiva himself. When he was thinking about the safety of the God there, he lost consciousness of himself and the bow dropped from his hands. Then he chanced to see leaves, flowers and water on the image and asked who it could be that had slighted the god thus. He was informed by Nāṇan that a Brahman used to do it every day. Tiṇṇan learnt then that it would please the god to be treated so. The thought struck him that the god might be hungry and so reluctantly he took leave of the god to fetch flesh, etc. He came to the foot of the hill where by the side of the Ponmukhari river he saw Kāḍan waiting for him and Nāṇan. The latter detailed to Kāḍan all that had transpired on the top of the hill when Tiṇṇan began examining with his teeth which was the best part of the cooked pig that could be offered to the god. He was taken for a mad man, but he himself was not conscious of anything unusual. He gathered the best meat in a teak leaf, filled his mouth with the water from the river, struck some flowers on his own tuft, took the bow and the arrow in his hands and climbed up the hill. He performed his pūja in his own fashion by bathing the image with the water carried in his mouth, throwing the flowers down from his own tuft and offering the meat. He then kept watch bow in hand at the gate. Throughout the night he stood guard and in the morning he went away in search of fresh meat. During his absence there came to the temple the saint Śivagōcariyār,



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versed in the Āgamas for performing the Pūja in that temple as usual:—

> எய்திய சீராகமத்திலியம்பிய பூசனைக் கேற்பக்
> கொய்த மலரும் புனலுமுதலான கொண்டணைந்தார்
> மைதழையுங் கண்டத்து மலைமருந்தை வழிபாடு
> செய்து வருந்தவமுடைய முனிவர் சிவகோசரியார். St.135

If this stanza is to be taken literally, it is proof of the spread of the Āgamas at least among some who like Śivagōcariyār performed the worship of Śiva in such shrines as Kāḷahasti. This sacred Brahman was shocked at the sight of meat scattered within the temple, and he inferred that this wicked deed of polluting the god should have been done by wicked huntsmen of the locality. He did all the religious rites needed to purify the deity and performing the regular pūja, went away to his place of penance in the forest. But Tiṇṇan came back and repeated his previous day's work so that the next day also Muni Śivagōcariyār had to perform the purification ceremony and other things. This happened every day for five days. On the fifth day Śivagōcariyār asked god to put an end to this wickedness, on the part of some unknown person. He had then a dream in which god spoke to him in high terms of Tiṇṇan's *Bhakti*. Then the Brahman wanted to see the *Bhakta* and so hid himself within the temple. Tiṇṇan came and then it was that the greatest of miracles happened. Tiṇṇan found one of Śiva's eyes bleeding. Lost in grief Tiṇṇan tried in vain all remedies known to him and finally plucked out his own eye and replaced Śiva's eyes with his own. He was overjoyed to see the cure. Then all of a sudden Śiva's other eye began bleeding. He decided to give his second eye also, but lest he

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shoud not be able to fix the spot where it should be placed, he planted his foot on the bleeding eye of Śiva and began to take out his own remaining eye. Then Śiva stretched out a hand and stopped Tiṇṇan from doing it saying at the same time "Eye, my child" (கண்ணப்ப). His vision was then restored to him and he became from that moment a god himself, taking his place by the side of Śiva.

In this story, we have the account of one who was from boyhood totally ignorant of Śaiva doctrine, philosophy or worship, but gained within six days the highest place possible for Śaiva devotees, through the intensity of his *Bhakti,* the nature of which was quite different from that of the ordinary Śiva worshippers. The story is equally valuable from the point of view of the development of Śaivism in the period when Kaṇṇappa Nāyanār lived; for, we find that there was at that time a Śiva temple in Kāḷahasti where one versed in the *Āgamas* was performing the daily *Pūja.* The *Pūjaka* was a *Muni* who permanently resided in his penance forest (or *Tapōvana*) in the immediate neighbourhood. This shows that holy men retired to the woods in the olden days, not only for doing penance, but also for performing *Pūjas.* The story also mentions that the worship was of the image of Śiva and not of the Śiva Liṅga. If the Saint Kaṇṇappa was to see Śiva's eye bleeding on the image, it is certain that the image or the idol was one with a human face. Again, we see that Śiva is there called by the name of the Kuḍumi Tēvar or the Tufted god. So, we may take it that the tuft was visible on

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the idol. We have no mention at all about the *liṅgam,* the usual form of Śiva, in all modern Śiva shrines. Since the Tēvāram hymners allude to Kaṇṇappa, it is certain that he lived before the seventh century A.D. The age of the shrine at Kāḷahasti cannot be ascertained for want of definite data, but whatever it might have been, it is fairly certain that this shrine visited by Kaṇṇappa, was much older than the shrines where the *liṅgam* is found, for otherwise Śiva shrines with idols of human faces must be much more numerous now. The present temple at Kāḷahasti has only a *liṅgam* in it, and so it is evidence to show that Śiva shrines with *liṅgams* in them are more recent structures than Śiva shrines with idols having human faces. Judging from the descriptions of Śiva temples in the *Śilappadikāram,* we must consider them to have been temples with idols and not the *liṅgam.* In canto 14 lines 7 to 10, we have the descriptions of the temples of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Baladēva and Subrahmaṇya where Śiva is called "He of the eye in the forehead", Viṣṇu, "He who has the flag of Garuḍa", Baladēva "He who raises the flag of the plough" and Subrahmaṇya "He who has the flag of the cock".[57] It is clear that the differentiation between the gods in the temples is based on the external differences in the figures in them.

In this connection, we may notice the account of Kāḷahasti as it appears in the *Kailāsa Samhitā* of the Śiva Purāṇa. Sūta narrates how he went there and

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[57] நுதல் விழி நாட்டத்திறையோன் கோயிலும்
உவணச் சேவலுயர்த்தோனியமும்
மேழி வலனுயர்த்த வெள்ளை நகரமும்
கோழிச் சேவற் கொடியோன் கோட்டமும்.

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worshipped Śiva. He also mentions that once upon a time a *Muni* gained union with Śiva there.

"Ēkadā tu samāstīrya śailājina kuśōttaram—
Āsanam paramam tasmin sthitvā ruddhēndriyō muniḥ
Samādhim āsthāya sadā paramānanda ciddhanaḥ
Paripūrṇaś śivōsmīti nirvyagra hṛdayō bhavam
Ētasminneva samayē madguruḥ karuṇānidhiḥ
Nīlajīmūta saṁkāśo vidyut piṅga jaṭā dharaḥ
Prāmśuḥkamaṇḍalūddaṇḍa-kṛṣṇājinassvayam
Bhasmāvadāta-sarvāngas-sarva-lakṣaṇa lakṣitaḥ
Tripuṇḍra vilasadbhālo rudrākṣālaṅ-kṛtākṛtiḥ
Padma patrāruṇa śyāmavistīrṇa nayanadvayaḥ
Prādurbhūya mṛdambhōjam tadānīmēva satvaram
Vimōhitas tathaivāsam ētad adbhutamāstikāḥ||[58]

Here we have the account of Śiva appearing before a *Muni*. We have no warrant for connecting the *Muni* with either Saint Kaṇṇappar or Śivagōcariyār. What we are now concerned with is that there was the Śiva temple at Kāḷahasti at the time that the *Śiva Purāṇam* was written, and the author of that purāṇam had heard of some great *Muni* having obtained a vision of God Śiva there. Hence even at that time, the place had become famous as a great religious centre.

The Purāṇam about Saint *Mānakkañjāṟa Nāyanār*, a contemporary of Sundarmūrti Nāyanār, is useful in giving us an idea of the articles of dress a Śiva ascetic used to have. He was a hereditary *sēnātipati* who took upon himself the task of serving Śiva Bhaktas. He had no children for a long time, but, after much penance, a daughter was born to him. She

[58] V. V. 26—32.

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was engaged to be married to Ēyarkōn Kalikkāma Nāyanār. It was then that Śiva appeared before Mānakkañjāṟa Nāyanār as a Śiva ascetic. He was welcomed into the house and when the host's daughter prostrated before the saint, the latter saw her long flowing hair and asked for it saying that it could be conveniently made into a *Pañcavaṭi.* From this, we get the information that the *Pañcavaṭi* was one of the articles of the Śiva Yōgi's dress. It was a *yagñōpavīta* of hair said, in the Tēvāram, to be worn by Śiva himself.[59] The request is readily granted and ultimately the miracle happens when the woman gets back the hair on her head mysteriously.

In this story also, we have an instance of the practice of the *Sādhana* known as *Caryā* which takes the form of serving Śiva ascetics.

*Arivāṭṭāya Nāyanār* was a Veḷḷāḷa of Kaṇamaṅgalam in the Cōḷa country who pinned his faith upon offering God Śiva food prepared of red rice, a sauce made of a red herb (செங்கீரை) and the mango pickle. He continued doing this in spite of the extreme poverty to which he was reduced. One day he became so weak for want of nourishment that he stumbled on his way to the temple and then the food he bore in his hands got spilt on the ground. In his grief at his inability to give god this food, he began to cut his throat. God then appeared before him and stopped him from committing suicide thus. Then the saint was taken into Śiva's world.

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[59]P. 228, V. 5.

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In the story of *Ānāya Nāyanār,* the service rendered to Śiva was to play on the flute for the pleasure of the god. The saint was born in the caste of cowherds and used to take cows to the woods, and while they were grazing, he used to play on his instrument. Once when he was thus playing under a Konṟai tree (the favourite tree of Śiva), the music captivated all the cows and calves. Also sheep, peacocks, etc., flocked to him. Even *Vidyādharas, Kinnaras, Dēvas,* came in *Vimānas.* The music captured the hearts also of snakes, lions, elephants, tigers, etc. Śiva was immensely pleased and took the saint to Kailās.

*Mūrti Nāyanār's* story deals with the opposition created to Śiva Bhaktas by a heretic usurper of the throne of the Pāṇḍyas. The Saint was a Vaiśya by birth and he was a devout worshipper of God Sundarēśvara in the Śiva temple at Madura. Daily he used to offer sandalwood paste to the god. All that time there was an invasion of the city by a Vaḍuga Karuṇāṭaka king of the north whose motive for attack was merely land-hunger;

கானக்கடிசூழ் வடுகக்கருநாடர் காவன்
மானப் படைமன்னன் வலிந்து நிலங்கொள்வானா
யானைக் குதிரைக் கருவிப்படை வீரர்திண்டேர்
சேனைக் கடலுங்கொடு தென்றிசைநோக்கி வந்தான் [60]

We are not in a position to determine when this occurrence took place. We may infer that the ruling Pāṇḍya was not a strong man for we hear later that he was defeated. It might have taken place during the period which is now usually styled the Kaḷabhra inter-

[60] St. 11

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regnum. The usurper was a supporter of Jainism. He began the persecution of Śaivas. He made it impossible for any one in Madura to obtain sandalwood. Mūrti Nāyanār was not daunted by this. He decided to use his elbow instead of sandalwood and began to rub it very hard upon the sandstone. Śiva was touched, and the saint was told that he would become the king of Madura soon. That night the cruel king died. Since there was no one to succeed to the throne, an elephant was sent with eyes closed to bring somebody to be placed on the throne. Mūrti Nāyanār was selected by the elephant. He then began to spread the cause of Śaivism. He reigned prosperously and finally went to Śiva's presence.

If there is an element of historical truth in this story, it means that there was Jaina opposition to Śaivism. The Jains had a royal champion in the Karṇāṭaka usurper and so Jainism must have been the accepted faith of many in the original kingdom of which this usurper was the lord. He is also said to have come southwards when he advanced upon Madura. Probably therefore he came from the line of the early Cāḷukyas. The incident might have happened before the days of Sambandar, for after Sambandar, there was no Mūrti Nāyanār among the kings of Madura named in the Śinnamannūr and Vēḷvikkuḍi plates. So if we regard Mūrti Nāyanār as having been anterior to Appar, then we get one valuable piece of information from this account viz., that there was opposition (of a somewhat bitter nature) between Jains and Śaivas for a pretty long period, extending

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over one or two centuries. There was no such opposition during the time when the *Śilappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai* were written. The question now is "When did the rivalry begin and why"? This question will be considered later.

When we take up the story of *Rudra Paśupati Nāyanār,* we see clearly how closely South Indian Śaivism was intertwined with the worship of the Vedic Rudra. The only thing to the credit of this saint was that it was his practice to recite the Śrī Rudram in a particular posture:—

ஆயவந்தண ரருமறை யுருத்திரங் கொண்டு
மாயனாரறியா மலர்ச்சேவடி வழுத்துந்
தூயவன் பொடுதொடர் பினிலிடையறாச்சுருதி
நேயநெஞ்சினராகி யத்தொழிறலை நின்றார் [61]

He thereby obtained the grace of Śiva.

The story of *Nanda,* like that of Kaṇṇappa, illustrates the cosmopolitan element in Śaivism. He was a *Pulaiya* by caste. He used to make drums, etc., needed for Śiva temples:—

கூரிலை யமுக்குடுமிப்படையண்ணல் கோயிறொறும்
பேரிகையேமுதலாய முகக்கருவி பிறவினுக்கும் [62]

It is evident that he was not allowed entrance inside the temple because it is stated that he stood outside when he supplied these things (கோயில்களிற்புற நின்று). Once he went to Tiruppunkūr for doing such service. While he was singing songs of devotion from outside that temple, he felt a longing to see the god, but found

[61] St. 4.
[62] St. 13.



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that the Nandi hid the god from his sight. Yet, because of his great devotion, God asked Nandi to move aside so that Nanda's wish might be fulfilled.

போரேற்றை விலங்கவருள் புரிந்தருளிப் புலப்படுத்தார்[63]

From this, we see that at the time he lived, Śiva temples had been constructed in the manner in which they now remain, with the Nandi in front of the God. Then he constructed a tank for the benefit of Śiva worshippers (குளக்தொட்டார்). This was another *'Toṇḍu'* or service of his. (That is also part of *'caryā'*). After having in this fashion visited many shrines, he felt a desire to see the God at Cidambaram. But knowing that he would not be permitted by the Brahmans there to go to the presence of the God, he used to give up the task every day saying that he would go the next day. Hence he got the name 'Nāḷaippōvār' or 'one who would go, the next day.' Ultimately, he did go. When he approached the place, he felt grieved that he was born in the lowest of castes. Admiring the Vedic rites, which were not for him, he went round the walls of the temple. He used to do this day and night, for some time, and always thought of what he could do to get a sight of the god within. Śiva knew of this *Bhakta's* devotion and so appeared to him in a dream and told him to get into fire so as to purify himself. The three thousand Brahmans of Cidambaram were also told in a dream to create a fire into which Nanda could descend for purification. The fire was made and Nanda got into it. He came out of it in the form of a sacred ascetic, with sacred thread on his shoulders. Then he went in only to be lost in communion with God.

[63] St. 17.

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From the foregoing account, it is clear that the Brahmans were prepared to regard Nanda as a holy person when they had convincing proof of his holiness; but only when they had it.[64] For our purposes, Nanda's story is useful in showing how Śaivism which, far from being a creed adopted by a small cultured section of the country, was capturing the minds even of the lowliest of the low, and opening out possibilities for them to attain the highest bliss.

*Tirukkuṟipputtoṇḍar* was a washerman by caste, and the service he did was to wash the clothes of Śiva devotees. As usual in such instances, God Śiva wanted to test him. So he appeared as a poor man with a very dirty rag. He was welcomed by Tirukkuṟipputtoṇḍar who offered to wash it for him. But that day a heavy rain poured incessantly and when the Toṇḍar found he could not dry the rag, he lost heart and out of his grief began to dash his head against the stone on which he washed clothes. Then Śiva appeared in his usual form and gave him liberation. The story is another illustration to show how any one, whatever his caste might be and whatever his service, could gain Śiva's grace.

In the story of *Caṇḍēśvara Nāyanār*, we have an illustration of how a true *Bhakta* could get so lost in his intensity of worship as even to harm his father. He was a Brahman youth who learnt the Vedas in his fifth year, and went through the *Upanayana* (wearing holy thread) ceremony in his seventh year. One day he

[64] It will also be seen how the Periya Purāṇam account differs very much from the current Nandan charitam, based on an opera by Gopalakrishna Bharati (19th Century), where a Brahman master is introduced who refuses Nandan permission to go to Cidambaram.

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saw a cowherd belabouring the cows he was tending, and so from that time onwards, he himself began to take the cattle for grazing. He loved them so much that their milk increased and then he decided to use the overflowing milk for performing the *Abhiṣēka* (bathing) ceremony for Śiva. He therefore sat down under an *Ātti* tree, on the banks of the river and constructing out of the river sand a temple and an image of Śiva began pouring the milk over the image. This matter was reported to his father, who could not understand the intensity of the devotion with which his son was doing this. The father approached and struck blows upon his son who was not conscious of the beating and so went on with his work. The father forcibly took away the milkpot from the hand of the son. Only then did he know, and then the son took the stick and delivered a blow at his father's leg. The stick had mysteriously become an axe and so the father lay dead on the spot. God Śiva now appeared and gave salvation to both father and son.

Since this incident is often referred to in the Tēvāram hymns, it must have happened before the time of Appar.

The life story of *Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār* is that of a Vaiśya woman who became a goddess through her love of God. When she was living with her husband, God appeared to her in the form of a Śiva devotee and she gave him food. Her husband had given her two mangoes, one of which she now gave the guest. Afterwards her husband came and when he had eaten the other one, he asked for the second mango. She then prayed and mysteriously a mango came to her

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which she served. The husband recognised the difference in taste and after she had given the true explanation, he asked her to produce another if what she said was true. She prayed to God and the mango appeared, but only to disappear when it had been given into the hands of the husband. The husband then knew that his wife was a superior being and thinking that he was not right in remaining her husband any longer, he secretly decided to abandon her. Later, he went to another place and married another woman. He had a daughter through his second wife, whom he named after his first wife. Then the relations of Kāraikkāl Ammayār came to know of her husband's condition and so took her to her husband. But he, his new wife and the daughter fell at her feet and worshipped her saying that she was a goddess. She then requested God to make her assume the form of a demoness which request was granted. She then went to Kailās and from there to Tiruvālangāḍu where she spent her life singing of Śiva. Her songs are included in the *Tirumuṟai,* and form part of the canonical literature of the Śaivas.

*Nami Nandi Aḍigaḷ* must have lived before Appar because the latter has spoken of him as Āṇippon. The story of the saint is interesting because it shows how real *Bhaktas* who had some scruples about caste were influenced by God Himself to relax those rules in the case of real devotees. In this story, there is also evidence of Jaina hostility towards Śaivas, which confirms the view, expressed already, of the prevalence of this sort of hostility for some time before the days of Appar.

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*Nami Nandi Aḍigaḷ* was a Brahman of Ēmappērūr who knew the *Śaiva mārga* and practised it. It was his practice to worship Śiva in the temple of Tiruvārūr. Once he desired to light the very many lamps there. So he went to one of the neighbouring houses and begged ghee for lighting the temple lamps. That house belonged to a Jain who replied that if he was so anxious as to light the lamp, he might as well take water and use it instead of ghee. The saint got vexed and so returned at once to the temple, and when he was giving vent to his sorrow he heard a voice that he might go to the tank and bring water for lighting lamps. He obeyed, and the lamps began to burn brilliantly. This he continued to do for several days. It was then that the Jaina faith lost hold upon men's minds because the Jains were defeated by the pious Daṇḍi Aḍigaḷ.

This part of the Purāṇam shows that there were Jains in the neighbourhood of Tiruvārūr.

Later, the Cōḷa king appointed this saint as one of his officers at Tiruvārūr to superintend the management of the temple. He therefore celebrated the festival of Panguni Uttiram. On one of such occasions, the God was taken to the place called Tirumaṇali and people of all castes flocked to see Him. After the celebrations were over, Nami Nandi Aḍigaḷ went home, but feeling that he had become polluted by the touch of all castes of people, he lay down on the pial. His wife asked him to go in and perform the usual *pūjā*, etc. He gave his reason, asked her to bring water but before the water was brought he had gone to sleep. Then he dreamt that God appeared to him and told him that all

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those who were born in Tiruvārūr were Śiva's *gaṇas* (and so could not be regarded as impure). He woke up and realising that he had done wrong in not having entered his own house, performed his *pūja* as usual and went to bed. In this way, to the last days of his life, he devoted himself to the service of Śiva and his devotees.

The allusion to Daṇḍi Aḍigaḷ in this story can be understood, if we examine the account of that saint in the *Periya Purāṇam*. Daṇḍi Aḍigaḷ was born blind in Tiruvārūr. He was a staunch *Bhakta* who was always repeating the Pañcākṣara (the sacred five letters). One day he desired to do the *Carya Sādhana* of digging a tank for the benefit of Śiva devotees. But a blind man attempting to do it was bound to provoke the derision of Jains living in the neighbourhood. The saint told them that this was one of the sacred duties that ought to be done by lovers of God. They retaliated in their own fashion, and ultimately Daṇḍi Aḍigaḷ asked them what they would do if he gained vision and they lost theirs. They replied that they would leave Tiruvārūr. Then the saint went to the temple and prayed for success in this controversy. Śiva gave him promise of help and counselled him to request the king to be the judge. The Cōḷa king stood as the judge the next day and the miracle happened. The Jains had to leave the town.

In this story also, we have evidence of the conflicts between Jains and Śaivas that must have been matters of daily occurrence before the days of Appar and Sambandar.

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*Mūrkha Nāyanār.* This saint was adopting, like many others, the practice of offering food to the worshippers of Śiva. He lost his all in such a good deed and so he resorted to gambling so that he might earn money to be spent upon Śiva devotees. The poet Śēkkiḻār has felt some compunctions in speaking of it and so he has spoken of this gambling as 'good gambling' (நற்சூது) as if gambling could be good at all. The saint went further. He even killed with the knife those who opposed him in gambling.[65]

சூதான் மறுத்தாரைச் சுரிகையுருவிக்குத்தி
நற்சூதர் மூர்க்கரெனும் பெயர் பெற்றார்,

The only redeeming feature about him was that he himself would not partake of that food:—(தாம் தீண்டார்) Practising this mode of Śiva worship he at last gained the presence of Śiva.

This shows how much Śiva worshippers were prepared to forgive in an ardent *Bhakta.*

The story of *Śākkiya Nāyanār* illustrates how a Buddhist was influenced in favour of Śaivism. This saint was born in a Veḷḷāḷa family and, after much learning, desired to find out the means by which he could get over birth and death. Thereupon he went to Kāñcī and sought many paths by which he might acquire true knowledge. He accepted Buddhism thinking he would find in it what he wanted. This shows that Kāñcī was a place of importance as a cultural centre, and that Buddhism was in a flourishing condition there. Most probably it continued to be so ever since the time when Aṟavaṇa Aḍigaḷ taught Maṇi-

[65]St. 9.

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mēkhalai. It was very likely that this Śākkiya Nāyanār lived not very long after the days of Aṟavaṇa Aḍigaḷ. After learning all the sacred works of the Buddhists, he got dissatisfied with their doctrines and came to the conclusion that truth could be really found only in Śaivism. In this connection, it is worth while noting that the opposition between Buddhism and Śaivism was not as frequest or fierce as that between Jainism and Śaivism. It is interesting to notice the change in Śākkiyạ Nāyanār which made him come to Śaivism, for thereby we get to know the working of a cultured man's mind. He came to the conclusion that the four real things were (1) the *Ātmas,* (2) their *Karmas,* (3) the results of those *Karmas* and (4) the *Pati* ;—[66]

செய்வினையுஞ் செய்வானு மதன்பயனுஞ் சேர்ப்பானு
மெய்வகையானான் காகும் விதித்தபொருளெனக்கொண்டே

It will be remembered that Buddhism does not take cognizance of the first and the fourth, i.e., the individual Ātmas and the Pati or in the language of the *Periya Purāṇam* "செய்வோன்" and "சேர்ப்போன்". The Nāyanār understood the spirit of Śaivism, and did not pay any great heed to the form of it. His conviction was that unless the grace of Śiva (*Pati*) was obtained, nothing was of any use:—[67]

" எந்நிலையி னின்றாலுமெக் கோலங்கொண்டாலு
மன்னியசீர் சங்கரன்றாள் மறவாமை பொருளென்றே
துன்னியவேடந்தன்னைத் துறவாதே தூயசிவந்
தன்னைமிகு மன்பினான் மறவாமை தலைநிற்பார். "

That was the reason why he did not give up his

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[66] St. 5.
[67] St. 6.



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Buddhist externals.[68] Yet, he developed a love towards the Śiva *Liṅga*. Once, the Nāyanār forgot himself in his admiration of the *Liṅga* and threw a stone on it.[69] In fact, he did not know what he was doing. He was so much absorbed in his thought about Śiva. The next day, he asked himself why he threw the stone, and, convincing himself that it was god's work, thought that he ought henceforth to worship god by throwing a small stone on the *Liṅga*.[70] He continued offering worship in this manner every day. But one day, he failed to do it and just as he sat down for a meal, he remembered that he had not thrown the usual stone and so he hurried forward to do it.[71] It was then that God Śiva appeared before him and took him into His world.[72]

There is nothing particularly striking in the account of Saint *Siṟappuli Nāyanār* of Tiruvākkūr who gained the grace of Śiva by ministering to the needs of Śiva *Bhaktas*,[73] reciting the *Pañcākṣara* with great emotion[74] and performing all Vedic sacrifices in honour of Śiva.[75] The story of this Nāyanār as well as that of Rudra-paśupati Nāyaṇār who did nothing other than uttering the *Śiva Rudram* in a particularly uncomfortable posture, is valuable in clearly evidencing the great harmony that subsisted between orthodox

[68]St. 7.
[69]St. 9.
[70]St. 11.
[71]St. 15.
[72]St. 17.
[73]St. 4.
[74]St. 5.
[75]St. 5.

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observers of the Vedic rules and the followers of Śaivism.

When we pass on to the account of *Cēramān-perumāḷ Nāyanār* a contemporary of Sundaramūrti, we get a point of importance relating to the spread of Śaivism in the Cēra country at that time i.e., there is evidence of the existence of many Śiva temples in that part of South India. It is stated that Sundaramūrti Nāyanār visited many of them:—

இன்னதன்மையிலுதியர் கடலைவர் தாடிடர்கெடமுனைப்பாடி
மன்னர் தம்முடன் மகிழ்ந்தினி துறையு நாண் பலைநெடுநாட்
[டெங்கும்
பன்னகம் புனைப்பரமர் தந்திருப்பதி பலவுடன் பணிந்தேத்தி
பொன்னெடுந் தடமூதெயின் மகோதையிற் புகுந்தனர்
[வன்றொண்டர். [76]

It is unfortunate that we do not have a list of those temples. From this reference, it is clear that Śaivism had penetrated every nook and corner of South India from the earliest times. The fact that Cēramān Perumāḷ knew of Sundarar and they visited each other and became intimate in their friendship is significant also in showing how pilgrimages to the sacred Śiva shrines in South India were quite normal in the early centuries of the Christian era. Further the friendly meeting between the Cēra, Cōḷa and Pāṇḍya kings in the company of Sundarar, and their joint journey to the several shrines in the Pāṇḍya country show how at the time of Sundarar, i.e., the eighth century A.D. the Śiva cult had gained predominance over the rival cults of Jainism and Buddhism. These three monarchs

[76] Veḷḷānaiccarukkam, St. 27.

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(the Cōḷa was not a very powerful king) visited a number of places, e.g. Tiruppūvaṇam,[77] Tiruvāppanūr, Tiruvēḍaham,[78] Tirupparaṅguṇṟam,[79] etc. There were many more which are not named in the *Periya Purāṇam*:—

அந்நாட்டுத் திருப்பதிகள் பலவு பணிந்திறைஞ்சி [80]

The opposition to Śaivism noticeable during the days of Appar and Sambandar is not very marked during the days of Sundarar and we may therefore take it that it was mainly due to the great work of Śaiva propaganda done by Appar, Sambandar and their followers.

The short Purāṇam about *Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār* is valuable not so much for purposes of Śaivism as for South Indian history at that time. This saint was a chieftain of Kaḷandai. Very probably he was connected with the Koḍumbāḷūr chieftains in the vicinity of Pudukōṭṭa. He made himself more and more powerful till at last he became strong enough to take possession of many places, belonging to the Cōḷas and the Pāṇḍyas. He desired to be crowned by the three thousand Brahmans of Cidambaram, as seems to have been the custom with the Cōḷa kings. But they refused to do it and expressing their loyalty to the Cōḷa line, left Cidambaram in fear of persecution to seek shelter with the Cēra monarch. Only one of them was left at Cidambaram, perhaps to serve the god in the temple. The Nāyanār then felt miserable that he could not

[77] St. 99.
[78] St. 101.
[79] St. 102.
[80] St. 105.

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gain his wish, and when he was worrying himself about it, God appeared to him in a dream and crowned him by placing the Divine Feet upon his head. The saint was immensely satisfied and after performing the *Pūjā* in several Śiva shrines ruled as one of the greatest rulers till he went to Śiva's world. Here the story abruptly ends. The claim of this person to become a Nāyanār consists only in his having been favoured by Śiva in his dream. As for the three thousand Brahmans who went to the Cēra country, we have no account of their later movements in the Purāṇam. They may be taken to have returned to Cidambaram after the time of the Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār. His rule must be regarded as one of the usurpations that should have happened in the days described as the Kaḷabhra interregnum in the Vēḷvikkuḍi charter.

*Pugal̤ Cōḷa Nāyanār* was a Cōḷa king having Uṟaiyūr as his capital. He is described as one of the ancestors of Anapāyan, or Kulōttunga, possibly the contemporary of Śēkkil̤ār. If the *Periya Purāṇam* account is true, this Nāyanār was able to command the respect of the other South Indian monarchs:—

பருவரைத்தோள் வென்றியினாற் பார்மன்னர் பணிகேட்ப [81]

He did much to promote Śaivism:—

அருமறைச் சைவந் தழைப்ப வரசளிக்குமந்நாளில் [82]

It was his custom to show respect to the Śiva devotees:—

பிறைவளருஞ் செஞ்சடையார் பேணு சிவாலயமெல்லா
நிறைபெரும் பூசனை விளங்க நீடுதிருத்தொண்டர் தமைக்
குறையிரந்து வேண்டுவன குறிப்பின் வழிகொடுத்தருளி
முறைபுரிந்து திருநீற்று முதனெறியே பாலிப்பார். [83]

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[81] St. 9.
[82] *ibid.*
[83] St. 10.

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He once went to Karūr for collecting the tributes due to him from the Koṅgu kings and other western rulers. He came to the temple called Ānilai and resided in one of the palaces there. This shows that at the time he was ruling the Cōḷa kingdom, Karūr was in Cōḷa hands. Almost all kings brought tributes to him there. It was then that he had the interview with Eripatta Nāyanār noticed above. On enquiry, his ministers told him that there was one person who had not paid his tribute. The recalcitrant chieftain Adigan had a mountain-fort as his hiding place. The king ordered the demolition of that fortress. The order was carried out and the fight that ensued was terrible. The battle seems to have taken place in the neighbourhood of Kuṟumboṟaiyūr.[84] That expression means the town of small hills. It refers to Tagaḍūr (or modern Dharmapuri) the capital of the Adigamāns of the days of the Śaṅgam. When the heads of the defeated people were brought before the king at Karūr, he saw that one of the heads belonged to a Śaiva devotee with the braid of hair on the top of it. This caused a feeling of horror in the mind of the king, the staunch Śaiva, and he decided that he should not live any longer. So he ordered a fire to be made into which he entered joyfully bearing the devotee's head on a gold plate. Thus he entered Śiva's world.

From this story we see that the king who did so much for the cause of Śaivism was prepared to commit suicide when he had brought about the death of a Śaiva

[84] St. 27. Kuṟum-poṟai means a small or pretty Cēra prince as opposed Perum-poṟai a title of Cēra Kings. Adigamān of Tagaḍur was related to the Cēras in the Śaṅgam Age. *S. K.*

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devotee. It was this same king who had attempted suicide on a previous occasion when he heard that this elephant had upset a basket of flowers gathered for the worship of Śiva. It is seen that the attachment to the cause of Śaivism was bordering upon fanaticism. Such adherents to the religion were not likely to tolerate Jains and others who held Śaiva devotees in contempt. Thus there was bound to be war to the knife between the rival sects, if ever such fanatics began to oppose each other. That was why hostility prevailed before and during the days of Appar. As for the time when Puhaḻ Cōḷa lived, we may gather that he should have been one of the few powerful Cōḷas, who lived after the Śangam period and before the end of the Kaḷabhra interregnum, i.e., in the third or fourth century A.D.

*Narasinga Munaiyaraiya Nāyanār* was one of the petty chieftains having his capital in Tirumunaippāḍi. The name seems to suggest that he was the Araiya or ruler who was lord of Narasinga Munai or the border of Pallava Narasinga's territory.[85] It is not improbable that the Narasinga may refer to Narasimha Varman Pallava, son of Mahēndra Varman. In that case, he ought to have lived immediately after the days of Appar. In the story of the Periya Purāṇam relating to Sundarar, we find it stated that this king brought up that lad:—

" நரசிங்க முனையரென்னு நாடுவா ழரசர்கண்டு[85a]
பரவருங்காதல் கூரப்பயந்தவர் தம்பாற்சென்று

[85] Narasinga, the frontier-chief seems the actual meaning of the term. *S. K.*

[85a] The Munaiyaraiyan was the ruler of the Munaippāḍi country, this being the name of the hilly region in the N. W. of the modern S. Arcot Dt. Nar. Munai. Nāyanār Purāṇam, St. 1; *EI.* vii, p. 136. *K. A. N.*

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விரவிய நண்பினாலே வேண்டினர் பெற்றுத்தங்க
ளரசிளங்குமரற் கேற்பவன்பினான் மகன் மைக்கொண்டார்"[86]

We shall have to notice this fact later on when we take up the date of Sundaramūrti. As for the doctrine of Śaivism that is revealed from the account of Narasinga Munai Araiyar, we can only state that the saint was observing the *carya* practice of offering food to Śaiva devotees, in whatever garb they appeared. In the story, the virtue he is credited with is the respect he paid to a Śiva devotee who appeared naked, and who therefore aroused the apathy of a number of people:—

ஆன செயன் முறை புரிவா ரொருதிருவாதிரை நாளின்
மேன்மை நெறித் தொண்டர்க்கு விளங்கிய பொன்னிடும் [பொழுதின்
மான நிலையழி தன்மை வருங் காமக்குறி மலர்ந்த
வூன நிகழ் மேனியரா யொருவர் நீறணிந்தணைந்தார் [87]

This shows that even Śaivas came to appear in the days of the saint, (and therefore of Sundarar also), like some Jains, without any clothing. It was natural that one creed should be affected by another in external characteristics. But the fact that many were induced to look upon this naked ascetic with contempt indicates that such things were rare:—

" மற்றவர்தம் வடி விருந்தபடி கண்டு மருங்குள்ளார்
உற்ற விகழ்ச்சியாகி " [88]

Yet, as time advanced, the appearance of some Śaivas as *Avadūtas*, or naked people, became more and more common. We have the instance of Sadāśiva Brahmam,

[86] St. 5. Taḍuttāṭkoṇḍa Purāṇam.
[87] St. 5. Narasiṅga Munaiyaraiya-nāyanār Purāṇam.
[88] St. 6, *ibid*.

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the famous saint of a much later period. The fact is noteworthy, because, in the Tēvāram hymns, Śiva is almost always described as wearing the *kaupīn,* or the loin-cloth. Since Śaiva ascetics usually appeared in one or other of the forms of Śiva, we notice, in the *Periya Purāṇam* descriptions about them, the frequent mention of the *kaupīn.* We have seen how Amarnīti Nāyanār's devotion was tested by a Śiva yōgi who came with a *kaupīn.* The opposition between Jainism and Śaivism that prevailed during the days of Appar and Sambandar was bound to make Śaivas regard the *kaupīnas* quite essential, for their hatred towards the Jains was partly due to the Jains appearing naked. But since Narasinga Munaiyaraiyar was a contemporary of Sundaramūrti, the saint who lived a few generations after Appar and Sambandar, the opposition towards Jainism had cooled down and the Jains had also become diminished in numbers. So then, if a Śaiva devotee chose to appear without any clothing, there would be some at least like Narasinga Munaiyaraiyar who would welcome him and do him honour.

*Adipatta Nāyanār* was a fisherman by caste, born in the Nuḷaippāḍi near Nāgapaṭṭaṇam or Negapatam.[89] This place was in the possession of the Cōḷas. Being a Śiva Bhakta, he used to give away to Śiva one of the fishes caught. In other words, the fish selected was let into the sea so that it might live on. This he did even on days when only one fish was caught. That would mean that he went with no fish for himself. Śiva wanted to test him as usual and so it happened that

[89] St. 5 & 1. Nuḷaippāḍi=ward of fisher-folk. *S. K.*



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continuously for a number of days, only one fish was caught and it had to be liberated. His body became leaner and leaner, for want of food. One day a gold fish, so valuable that with its price he could purchase the whole world, came into his net singly. The saint let it go into the sea as usual. Then Śiva was pleased. It rained flowers and the Nāyanār had a vision of Śiva. He was then taken into Śiva's world.

The point worth noting in the story is the fact that such low-caste folk as fishermen should be devotees of Śiva. Taken along with the accounts about the others who belonged to the similar castes, we can at once see how widespread the creed was and how cosmopolitan its spirit. The *sādhana* of Adipatta Nāyanār, if it could be given such a high term, may be spoken of as *Kriyā* in as much as it consisted of offering something (here, the captured fish) to God. There was no worship of the *liṅga* or of an image, or of any embodied being. The worship was quite simple in itself and was offered to the bodyless being, Śiva. It differed completely from the worship of the Sea-God or any other God by means of religious rites, which ought normally to be expected among men of the lowest castes. All this points to the fact that Śaivism which had its origins in the Vedas themselves was capable of making its appeal to the lowest of the low, whatever their mental equipment, or level of culture might be.

In the story of *Kalikkamba Nāyanār*, a Vaiśya of Peṇṇāgaḍam, we see the brutal manner in which the Nāyanār treats his wife for what he conceived to be an

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offence against a Śaiva devotee. It was the Nāyanār's custom to welcome Śiva devotees to his house and feed them after showing respect to them by washing their feet, his wife helping him to do it. Once it happened that one who had some time back been their servant came into the house as a Śaiva devotee and when the Nāyanār began washing the guest's feet, his wife did not help him. So he cut off his wife's hands and performed the service himself. This was his manner of showing his devotion. He is said to have joined Śiva at last as a consequence of this form of *Caryā* that he practised.

If Śēkkiḻār, writing at the close of the eleventh century should have regarded this act of brutality (and similar other acts of others) as excusable in Śiva Bhaktas, it means that the Śaivas of his time were such staunch advocates of Śaivism as to persuade themselves that ordinary rules of ethics and morality could not be applied to the Nāyanārs. Faith in Śaivism had therefore taken very deep root in the minds of the ordinary Śaivas. That was no doubt due to the great spiritual and literary achievements of Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar.

*Kalianāyanār* was born in Tiruvoṟṟiyūr in the caste of the oil-mongers. His way of showing his devotion to Śiva was to light the temple lamps with oil supplied by himself. In course of time he lost his all, and so he hired himself out as a labourer and bought oil from his earnings for temple use. But owing to competition, he could not earn enough even in that way. He therefore sold his house and other possessions. That

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was also insufficient and so he thought of selling his wife. But none would purchase her. Then he got desperate and decided to offer his own blood in the place of oil. As he was attempting to do this, Śiva's grace descended upon him.

In the story of *Śatti Nāyanār* of Variñjiyūr (in the Cōḷa country), we have one more instance of extreme bigotry. He used to honour Śaiva devotees and he made it a point of cutting off the tongues of those who spoke ill of Śiva devotees:

........................ இகழ்ந்தியம்பும்முரை
வைத்தநாவை வலித்தரி சத்தியாற்
சத்தியாரெனு நாமந்தரித்துளார் St. 3.

Because of his ability to do it, he was called Śattiyār. This action of his was his good work (திருப்பணி). Because of this, he is said to have reached Śiva's world; another instance of foolish fanaticism.

*Aiyaḍigaḷ Kāḍavarkōn* could not have been much earlier than Sundaramūrti, for he was a Pallava, ruling over Kāñci. We do not find even a single instance in Śangam literature of Kāñci being in any way connected with the Pallavas. Aiyaḍigaḷ is not one of the names appearing in the Pallava charters, and we can safely infer that his real name must have been different. If he is to be identified with any one of the Pallavas known to epigraphists, the fact of his abdication for a religious cause and the succession of his son in his place have to be taken into account. We do not have any evidence to enlighten us in this respect. As the data do not suit any of the kings of the Simhaviṣṇu

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line, we can only guess, that Aiyaḍigaḷ must have lived before the seventh century. If this inference is correct, we may conclude that even before the days of Appar there were some who went to the temples in South India and sang of god Śiva in different places—for, Aiyaḍigaḷ is said to have done so.

வண்டமிழின் மொழி வெண்பாவோ ரொன்றுவழுத்துவார் [90]

The king was also learned in the Sanskrit scriptures:—

மன்னவரும் பணிசெய்ய வடநூறென்றமிழ்முதலாம்
பன்னுகலை பணிசெய்ய, [91]

The service he did to God was singing thus of Him in different places and visiting the sacred shrines—not different from the path pursued by Sundaramūrti Nāyanār himself.

*Kaṇampulla Nāyanār* was a wealthy person of Irukkuvēḷūr who made it a point of lighting the lamp in Śiva shrines. He came to Cidambaram, and when he was continuing to do this, his property was all spent, and then he began to cut grass and purchase oil with its price. It came to pass that he could not find a sale and so he burnt the grass itself as such. Even grass became scanty and then he decided to burn his hair. It was then that Śiva showed His grace to him and took him into Śiva's world. This was also a case of *Caryā*.

The story of *Kāri Nāyanār* whose date cannot be now known, illustrates how there were some devotees who could earn by their songs enough money to build temples and thus do one kind of *Caryā*. He used to go to the three Tamil kings and get money by singing

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[90] St. 4.
[91] St. 3.

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Tamil *Kōvais*.[92] This money was used for building 'residences for Śankara', i.e. Śiva shrines.

It is also noteworthy that private individuals like Kāri Nāyanār who had only their learning to sell, should have done something of their own, for the purpose of temple-building, a very effective method of spreading the cause of Śaivism.

Apropos of temple-building, the story of *Vāyilā Nāyanār* (or the dumb saint) illustrates how some Śiva devotees were advanced enough to construct temples mentally and adopt the practice of what is called *Mānasa Pūja* or mental worship. This Nāyanār of Mylapore was one such. He was a Śūdra. His manner of worship is well described by Śēkkiḻār:—

மறவா மையானமைத்த மனக்கோயிலுள்ளிருத்தி
யுறவாதி தனையுணருமொளி விளக்குச் சுடரேற்றி
யிறவாத வானந்த மெனுந்திருமஞ்சன மாட்டி
யறவாணர்க் கன்பென்னுமமுதமைத்தர்ச்சனை செய்வார்.[93]

"He built the temple of non-forgetfulness, lit the shining lamp of self-illumination, bathed the god in the immortal waters of *Ānanda* and worshipped him with the elixir of love". It was thus that the saint obtained salvation.

The account of *Munaiyaḍuvār* illustrates how there were some holy persons even among those who hired themselves out as professional fighters. This saint of Tiru Nīḍūr, in the Cōḷa country, was usually engaged as a fighter by the vanquished. He fixed a

[92]St. 1. One wonders if the *Pāṇḍik-kovai* cited largely in the commentary to the Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ was among the compositions of this saint?

[93]St. 8.

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wage for this service of his, and with the money so gained he used to offer rich food to Śaiva devotees. That was his *Sādhana* of *Caryā*. From these details, it is open to infer that warfare was pretty frequent between rebels and reigning monarchs. Such encounters must have happened mostly on the borders and it was in that kind of border warfare that this saint distinguished himself.

In the story of *Kaḻarciṅga Nāyanār,* we have an instance of the brutal manner in which *Śiva Bhakti* displayed itself both in a Śaiva devotee and in the king. This monarch was an 'ancient' Pallava (தொல்லைப் பல்லவர்), one of the 'Simha' ancestors of Simha Viṣṇu accorling to Professor G. J. Dubreuil's list, possibly living in the beginning of the sixth century A.D. (or a little earlier). He is said to have won victories in the northern country.[94] He was in the habit of visiting many sacred shrines and once he came to Tirvuārūr with his queen. There the queen committed an act of indiscretion by smelling a flower which had been gathered for the sake of Śiva and which had accidentally fallen on the floor. The saint Śeṟuttuṇai Nāyanār at once lost control of himself and cut off the nose of the queen. The king came to know of it and gave an additional punishment to the queen by cutting off her hand also. Both these persons were applauded by the world for their great devotion to Śiva. It rained flowers. Kaḻaṟciṅgar gained Śiva's grace in due time.

[94] St. 2:

கூடலர் முனைகள்சாய வடபுலங்கவர்ந்துகொண்டு.

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The account of Śeruttuṇai Nāyanār confirms the story narrated above, and adds that Śeruttuṇai was a native of Tañjai. From the two accounts it is quite clear that both these saints were incapable of governing their impulses. But in fairness to Śaivism, we should be careful to remember that it was their merit of devotion to God and not their inability to control themselves that enabled them to obtain Śiva's grace. The latter was undoubtedly a defect and would have been regarded as such in the days of Śēkkiḻār, as now. The merits they had must be taken to have out-weighed their defects. Else *Yama* (control), *Niyama* (discipline) and such other things, as applied to the practices of Śaivas would become meaningless terms.

*Iḍaṅgaḻi Nāyanār* was also a saint with some defects; but they consisted in acts of extravagance when Śaiva devotees were concerned. According to the Purāṇam, he was the king of the Vēḷs in Koḍumbāḷūr in Kōnāḍ, which may be taken to be the neighbourhood of Pudukōṭṭa. The Vēḷs of that place seem to have remained there from very early times as is seen from references in Śangam literature. Kōnāḍ is alluded to in the *Puṟanānūṟu.*[95] We cannot, however, state anything definite about the time when Iḍaṅgaḻi Nāyanār lived. He was a staunch devotee believing also in the Vedic path.

சைவ நெறிவைதிகத்தின் றருமநெறி யொடுந்தழைப்ப
மைவளருந் திருமிடற்றார் மன்னிய கோயில்க ளெங்கு
மெய் வழி பாட்டர்ச்சனைகள்.....................

முறைபுரியு மந்நாளில் [96]

[95] P. P. 54, 61, 167, etc.
[96] St. 5.

Once some one entered his granary, in the darkness of the night, and began to steal paddy. He was caught by the watchmen; but when the king learnt on enquiry that the thief's motive was to feed Śaiva devotees, he not only liberated him, but called upon all Śaiva devotees to freely enter his granary and take as much paddy as they could. This act must, from the commonsense point of view, be regarded one of extravagance productive of more harm than good. But it was thus that the king displayed his zeal for the cause of Śaivism and gained in due time Śiva's blessing.

In the story of *Pugaḻ Tuṇai Nāyanār,* we have the instance of God Śiva helping a devotee to tide over the evil effects of a famine. He was a native of Śeruviliputtūr belonging to the caste of Śiva Maṟaiyōr, i.e., Ādi Śaivas. The Ādi Śaivas were the Brahman *arcakas* in Śiva temples. The name gives a clue to the manner in which Śaivism was introduced into the Tamil country. The term Ādi Śaiva, literally means the First Śaivas. That the first Śaivas were Brahmans is seen from the other name (applied to them in the *Periya Purāṇam* stanza referred to above) Śiva Maṟaiyōn. This latter expression literally means Śaiva Brahman. Since these were the *arcakas* of Śiva temples in early days and continue to be so even now, we may infer that these were the people who stationed themselves in different parts of India, including South India, for the purpose of performing the Pūjā in Śiva temples. The reference in the Purāṇas and the Epics (as noticed above) prove the existence of Śiva shrines in many corners of South



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India. The number of such shrines must have increased as time advanced, owing to the increase of population, and also owing to the development of Śaivism. Thus if the people of the locality desired to get acquainted with the religion of Śaivism, there was no difficulty at all for them owing to the existence of a number of Śiva shrines. We may very well take it that there would not have been any conscious attempt on the part of these *arcakas* or others who believed in the doctrines of Śaivism to spread the doctrines. What actually happened must have been quite simple. They remained in different localities worshipping Śiva in the shrines and performing the regular *Pūjas* in accordance with the *Āgamas* of which they must have had knowledge. Those who witnessed their performance went to the temple, and prayed to the deity inside the shrine for one thing or another, and if their prayers were granted, they were bound to believe in the deity more and more. It was unnecessary for them to get initiated into any rites or ceremonies, to learn any dogmas or doctrines or even to give up their religious or social practices. That was the reason why anybody and everybody, to whichever caste or community he belonged, was able to have faith in Śiva, to get his desires satisfied through the grace of Śiva, and in some cases to acquire psychic powers so as to perform miracles. In the majority of instances, the devotee, whether he was learned or illiterate, thought nothing of the miracles themselves, because to him there was nothing wonderful inasmuch as it was his firm belief that that God could do anything however impossible it might be for a human being.

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In the story of this Saint Pugaḻ Tuṇai, he was *Pūjaka* of the temple, and he had the duty of bathing the image (uttering the holy *mantrams*) and doing several other similar things. Once a famine swept over the land and he did not have the wherewithal to procure food, yet he was so fond of the deity (Śiva) and of his duty to it that he did not have the heart to give it up and move away to places where there was no famine.[97] So he fixed himself in his own place and in spite of his fatigue, he fetched the needed water from a pot and poured it over the image. But in doing so, he dropped the pot on the Śiva image's head in sheer exhaustion.[98] He fainted away into a deep sleep and then it was that he saw a dream in which Śiva assured him that he would find one *kāśu* left by God for him every day in the shrine which he might use for purchasing food.[99] When he woke up he found that his dream had come true, and he was thus enabled to get over the difficulty of the famine.[100] Finally he reached Śiva's world.[101]

*Kōṭpuli Nāyanār* was a commander under a Cōḷa king, whose name or date is not known, and the emoluments he obtained were utilised to purchase paddy to meet the expenses of the Śiva temples. Once he had to go away on military duty. So with the object of making provision for the temple expenses during his absence, he stored the paddy and laid injunctions upon all his relations that they were not to touch it. During

[97] St. 2.
[98] St. 3.
[99] St. 4.
[100] St. 6.
[101] St. 6.

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his absence there was a famine and his relations could not resist the temptation of taking paddy from the store to escape starvation. When the warrior returned, he heard of it and killed all of them not excluding even a baby. The Purāṇam goes on to state that for this 'pious' act, he was asked by Śiva to guard His world.

The acts perpetrated by this Nāyanār were, it cannot be denied, those of a bigot. Yet we see in Kōṭpuli's act his thorough conquest of the sentiment of filial and parental love. He did not allow such feelings to stand in the way of what he conceived to be his 'duty' to God.

The account of *Pūśalār Nāyanār* is another instance of the efficacy of *Mānasa Pūjā* or mental worship. He was a Brahman of Tiruninṟavūr in Toṇḍai Nāḍ, who was famous for his knowledge of the Vedas. He had a great desire to build a temple for Śiva but had no money for that. He did not think of his poverty. He satisfied himself with constructing the temple in thought. He mentally gathered the necessary materials, fixed an auspicious day for commencing the work, and mentally did everything in accordance with the *Āgamas*. Finally it was complete in his mind, and then he fixed the day for installing the deity in it. It was just on that day that the Pallava King (Narasimhavarman II, Rājasimha, who built the Kailāsanātha temple) wanted to consecrate the Śiva image in the temple he had constructed. On the previous night, the king had a dream in which Śiva asked him to postpone the ceremony, because He would be in Pūśalār

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Nāyanār's temple. The king woke up and went to Tiruninṟavūr to do honour to such a great devotee, and was surprised to find that it was a mental temple whose existence was not known to any one in the neighbourhood. Pūśalār Nāyanār was greatly overjoyed that God Śiva had blessed him thus. He continued to perform worship in the temple he had constructed till he finally went to Śiva's presence.

The paucity of information available to Śēkkiḻār about the Tiruttoṇḍar is seen in many of the stories in the Periya Purāṇam; but perhaps nowhere more significantly than in that of *Nēśa Nāyanār*. He is spoken of as a native of Kāmpili, a weaver by caste, devoted to the uttering of the Pañcākṣaram and gaining God's grace by supplying strips of cloth to Śiva *Bhaktas.* The poet had no more information about him. This may be taken as evidence to show that the Saints who received God's grace were innumerable and their names and histories were unknown. Sundaramūrti had a vision about some of them and he named them. Poet Śēkkiḻār did his best to obtain as much information about them as he could and wrote out what he knew. He could not do anything more. That is the reason why the accounts are sometimes scrappy, fragmentary and unsatisfactory.

The story of *Kō-ccengaṇ* as it appears in the *Periya Purāṇam* is valuable as throwing light upon the history of temple-building by Cōḻa monarchs. As for his date, it is doubtful if he lived in the age of the Śangam for the reference about him in the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* poem 74 is in the colophon and not in the poem

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itself. Yet, since there is that reference it may be presumed that he could not have been very far removed from Śēran Śenguṭṭuvan, the central figure of the Śangam period.[102] The story that Kō-ccengaṇ was pleased to hear the *Kaḷavaḷi* read out to him, if taken to be true, will show that the monarch must have been the contemporary of the poet Poygaiyār who sang it. Dr. S. K. Aiyangar has argued that this poet was no other than Poigai Āḻvār and that the second century A.D. is the age of Poigai Āḻvar.[103] In that case, Kō-ccengaṇ lived in the century of Śēran Śenguṭṭuvan, possibly a few years after him. Accepting these conclusions, we must hold that Kō-ccengaṇ built some Śiva shrines and some houses for the Brahmans of Cidambaram in the second century A.D.; for these are mentioned in the *Periya Purāṇam*.[104] As for the construction of houses for Brahmans at Cidambaram,[105] the question arises as to whether or not there were the Brahmans then at Cidambaram. The Brahmans may be taken to be the "Tillai Three Thousand." If they were there, when did they come there and why are they not mentioned in Śangam literature. In fact, the temple of Cidambaram is not referred to even once in the Śangam collections. If Kō-ccengaṇ was very near in point of time to Śēran Śenguṭṭuvan and his Cōḷa contemporaries and at the same time we do not have a reference to Cidambaram, only one of two explanations seems to be possible. Either the temple did not exist before the days of Kō-ccengaṇ, or the poems

[102] S. K. Aiyangar—*Ancient India*, pp. 255, 399.
[103] *Early History of Vaiṣṇavism in South India*, pages 72—75.
[104] St. 10 and 16.
[105] St. 16.

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referring to it might have been lost. The latter is possible, because we do not at present have all the Paripāḍals which, according to the traditional account, numbered 70.[106] Now we have only 24. As for the other works of the Śangam collections, they deal with matters which need not have had anything to do with Cidambaram. If we suppose that Cidambaram did not exist before the days of Kō-ccengaṇ, we have to admit that our evidence for such a supposition is not clear. It is true, we do not find the place referred to in the Mahā Bhārata or the Rāmāyaṇa. As for the Śiva Purāṇam and other works, as they now exist, we cannot be certain about their age. They are apt to contain information about earlier and later events inextricably mixed up. But for the mere reason that these pieces of literature do not mention the place, we cannot be positive about the comparative modernity of the place. It is perhaps safe to assume that it might have been old, but not so much known as other important centres. But somehow Kō-ccengaṇ came to have something to do with it, and it became the practice of the Cōḷas to get crowned there by the 'three thousand.' This is evidenced by the story of Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār in the Periya Purāṇam.

தில்லை வாழந்தணர் தம்மை வேண்ட வவருஞ் செம்பியர்தந்
தொல்லை நீடுங்குலமுதலோர்க்கன்றி சூட்டோ முடியென்று[107]

If such was the custom during the days of the Śangam, we must have had some allusion to it, but we do not have it. Hence, it is likely that the practice began only after the time of Kō-ccengaṇ. This view seems to be

[106]Srīnivāsa Pillai—*Tamiḻ Varalāṟu*, Vol. II, page 2.
[107]St. 4.

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supported by the *Periya Purāṇam* account about Kō-ccengaṇ. The relevant details are as follows :—Śubha dēva the Cōḷa king and his wife Kamalavati were spending their time worshipping God Śiva at Cidambaram. Then the Queen prayed to God for a son, and since God was pleased, a spider which had done much religious work in the past came to be born as her son. The mother died after the child was born. Śubhadēva brought him up with care and crowning him *there,* went away to Śiva Lōka (died).

Now 'Śubha Dēva' looks very much like a manufactured name. We do not come across any similar name among the Early Cōḷas. It can be safely presumed that Śēkkiḻār or his informant had no knowledge of Kō-ccengaṇ's father's name. Further Śēkkiḻār does not give us any valuable information about the father. If he was the king of the ancient Cōḷas,[108] why could he not be described as having had his capital at Uṟaiyūr? It is therefore to be suspected that the Cōḷa power was on the wane at the time that this king came to the throne. That is not impossible considering the fact that he followed the last of the Śangam kings. We have it stated in the *Padiṟṟuppattu* and the *Śilappadikāram* that Śēran Śenguṭṭuvan defeated nine Cōḷas at Nērivāyil. This has been rightly taken by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar to mean the decline of Cōḷa greatness.[109] Thus if the Cōḷas were no longer masters of Uṟaiyūr, those who were descended from that line must have lived somewhere in insignificance, and one of them was perhaps at

[108] தொன்மைதரு சோழர்குலத் தரசனும் சுபதேவன். St. 7.

[109] Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, *Ancient India*, pp. 95-6.

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Cidambaram. This man must have longed for some strong son who would rise to a position of importance and re-establish the greatness of the Cōḷas. His prayer was granted, and posterity knew only of the son Kō-ccengaṉ and not of the father. Śēkkiḻār, or some one else before him, gave the father of Kō-ccengaṉ the name Śubha Dēva or 'good lord'. Because it was the god of Cidambaram who blessed the poor father, the son got himself crowned there and that continued to be the custom even after Uṟaiyūr was re-captured. This seems to be a possible explanation of the story. Further, because the prosperity was due to God's grace Kō-ccengaṉ might have done everything in his power to provide for the regular worship in the Cidambaram temple. He could very well have been the person who brought in the priests of the Cidambaram temple who became in course of time "the Tillai Three Thousand." These were well versed in the Śaiva Āgamas, and formed a separate class by themselves. The freedom enjoyed by them was in the first instance granted to them by the king so that they might have all inducement necessary to stay on in Cidambaram; for, otherwise, Cidambaram might become deserted as other ancient temples (like Podiyil) became deserted. The fact that the worship conducted in the temple of Cidambaram differs in considerable detail from the *Pūjā* rendered in other temples is also significant. According to the Gazeteer "the ritual in the temple more resembles that of domestic worship than the forms commonly followed in other large shrines."[110] This shows that they must have come in a body from

[110] South Arcot Dt. Gazeteer, p. 279.



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some place far remote from the immediate vicinity of Cidambaram. Somebody ought to have invited them. Very probably it was Kō-ccengan. It is perhaps this fact that is alluded to in the *Periya Purāṇam* when it says that Kō-cceṅgaṇ built mansions for Brahmans:

வருவாய்மை மறையவர்க்கு மாளிகைகள் பலசமைத்தான். [111]

Such deeds of the monarch were bound to have an important effect upon the development of Śaivism in South India. Cidambaram became a place of great religious importance in Śaiva history. The god of that temple was worshipped and praised by all the Nāyanārs who made songs. Māṅikka Vāśagar also composed a *Kōvai* in honour of that deity.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Brahmans who had the duty of performing the services to the God of Cidambaram are called in the *Periya Purāṇam* as the 'Tillai-vāḻ Andaṇar' which literally means the Brahmans who live in Tillai or Cidambaram. Now-a-days the *Pūjakas* of Cidambaram go by the name of *Dīkṣitas*. They now number only 250 and not 3000.[112]

In the *Periya Purāṇam* account of the Tillai-vāḻ-Andaṇar, there is no reference to these Brahmans being initiated (or going through any *Dīkṣā* ceremony). Ārumuga Nāvalar, in his *Periya Purāṇa Vacanam* describes the 'Tillai three thousand' as having gone through the *Samaya Dīkṣā, Viśeṣa Dīkṣā, Nirvāṇa Dīkṣā,* and *Ācārya Dīkṣā.*[113] He goes on to say that

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[111] St. 16.
[112] South Arcot Dt. Gazeteer, p. 273.
[113] P. 59.

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they were masters of all the *Āgamas*.[114] There is no warrant in the text of the *Periya Purāṇam* for such statements. Yet, if we consider the life and work of Tirumūla Nāyanār, we can see how the *Āgamas* must have been known to at least some of the people in South India, particularly, those who had the duty of performing the *Pūjas* in the temples.

114 *Ibid.*

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# CHAPTER IX.

## TIRUMŪLAR.

*Tirumūla Nāyanār* was, according to the *Periya Purāṇam,* the author of *Tirumandiram,* one of the most authoritative works embodying the Śaiva doctrine.

He was one of the Brahman *Yōgis* who had obtained the grace of Nandi who was the permanent door-keeper of Śiva and who had the reputation of showing the way for Indra, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and others. He had a longing to see sage Agastya on Podiyil hills and began his journey southwards. Passing through Kēdāra, Nepal, Avimuktam, the Vindhyas, Kāḷahasti, Kāñcī, Tiruvadigai, and Perumbaṟṟappuliyūr, he came to the banks of the Kāvēri and found near Āvaḍuturai, some cattle bemoaning the death of the cowherd Mūla. Having compassion upon the cows, the *yōgi* got into the body of Mūla and drove the pleased cattle homeward. On reaching the cowherd's house, the late cowherd's wife approached him, but he would not permit her to touch him. She spent a sleepless night not knowing what had happened to her husband who was unwilling to touch her or even to talk to her. Then those who saw him said that he was one of the great *yōgis* whose greatness could not be understood by any one. Then he meditated upon God and wrote out the doctrines of Śaiva philosophy in three thousand stanzas at the rate of one stanza in one year. After having thus lived 3000 years he went back to Śiva's world. Such is the miraculous story, useful only to

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warn us how little was known of the real life of Tirumūlar.

What Tirumūlar did was to render into Tamil the Śaiva doctrines as they were found in the Sanskrit Śaiva Āgamas which were current both in Northern and Southern India for several centuries past. His work became the foundation upon which the later structure of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy was built. But it is very doubtful if the people living at the time of Appar, Sambandar, and Sundarar had any complete knowledge of the *Tirumandiram*. The Saints of the *Periya Purāṇam* were mostly uncultured folk whose outstanding virtue was their intense *Bhakti* which did not depend for its growth upon the Śaiva philosophy as it found expression in Tirumūlar's work. As evidenced in the accounts of Jaina conflicts with Śaivism in the lives of Appar, Sambandar, Daṇḍi Aḍigaḷ and others, the victories won for the cause of Śaivism were through miracles and not through controversies or philosophical disputations. The man in the street was not likely to be won over by theoretical argumentation, but would need practical proof which could be afforded only through miracles. That was why miracles were displayed by many of the *Periya Purāṇam* saints, and the argument by miracles served its purpose most effectively since low caste men like Kaṇṇappa and Nanda were regarded worthy of the greatest respect. The value of *Tirumandiram* came to be realised after the age of miracles passed away, when scholarship developed in the land and human intelligence widened so as to perceive and therefore be influenced by subtlety of reasoning.

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## THE PROBABLE DATE OF TIRUMŪLAR.

This point has been discussed by Dr. V. V. Ramaṇa Śāstri of Vēdāraṇyam in his introduction to Mr. M. V. Viśvanātha Piḷḷai's edition of the *Tirumaṇdiram.*[1] Since the article is in Tamil and since the book itself is now out of print, it is better to note here the salient arguments advanced by the learned scholar.

"Tirumūlar's name is included among the names of the Toṇḍar in Sundarar's *Tiruttoṇḍattogai.* Historical investigation conducted so far leads to the conclusion that Sundarar lived before the ninth century A.D.[2] Thus Tirumūlar must have lived before the ninth century A.D. It is not easy to settle how much earlier he was than Sundarar.

"Śēkkiḷār's *Periya Purāṇam* (which gives an account of Tirumūlar) had for its original, the Sanskrit work called *Bhakta Vilāsam,* one of the minor Purāṇas based upon the *Skanda Purāṇam.* This *Bhakta Vilāsa* appears in two forms, one of which goes by the name *Upamanyu Bhakta Vilāsam,* written by Upamanyu who initiated Kṛṣṇa into Śaivism; and the other called *Agastyar Bhakta Vilāsam* said to have been written by sage Agastya. Upamanyu's *Bhakta Vilāsa* has not yet appeared in print. It is on that work that Śēkkiḷār's work is mostly based. But these Sanskrit works and the *Periya*

[1]Ripon Press, Madras, 1912.

[2]In an article written by me on 'Who was the Pāṇḍya contemporary of Cēramān Perumāḷ, in the *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. VII, 111 f. I have stated that the Perumāḷ, a contemporary of Sundarar, lived in the eighth century A.D.

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*Purāṇam* do not agree in all points about the life of Tirumūlar. Yet there is agreement regarding the detail that Tirumūlar's soul (*jīva*) entered into the body of a shepherd and did penance. His having written the *Tirumandiram* and gone to Kailās afterwards is found in Upamanyu's *Bhakta Vilāsam*, but not in Agastya's.

"Examining the narrative of Tirumūlar's life, it is found that he came to South India from Kailās. The name Kailās is applied to a high mountain range lying to the north-east of Kashmir. It was there that the *Āgamānta* called *Pratyabhijñā Darśanam* flourished. The *Āgamānta* called *Śaiva Siddhānta* is the essence of the 28 Sanskrit *Āgamas*. Though this *Āgamānta* is clearly told in the above-mentioned Sanskrit *Āgamas* which deserve to be regarded as the true teachings of the four Vedas, its truths lie hidden in the Upaniṣads and the Brahmaṇas; for *Āgamānta* is the inner meaning of the Vēda. Hence the seeker after the truths of the Vēdas will get to know them to the extent to which he has exerted himself. It is for the purpose of making the meanings clear to every one that the 28 *Āgamas* came to be written in Sanskrit in the valley of Kashmir. This *Āgamānta* arose in North India long before Jainism came into prominence. There it went by the name of *Pratyabhijñā Darśanam*. Then it spread westwards and southwards. In Western India it was known as *Vīra Mahēśvara Dārśanam*, and in South India it was called *Śuddha Śaiva Darśanam*. Yet, it did not contain any one of the indispensable teachings of *Āgamānta*. This spread of *Āgamānta* in the South must have happened

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thousands of years before the rise of the four Saints, Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Māṇikkavāśagar. Temple-worship is one of the external ceremonies advocated in the *Āgamānta*. Hence, we may take it that the time when temple-worship began in South India was also the time when the *Āgamānta* came to the South. Since Tirumūlar correctly explains the rare truths and teachings of *Āgamānta,* since the Tamil tradition is consistent that Tirumūlar came from Kailās, and since there is great similarity between Tirumūlar's teachings and *Pratyabhijñā Darśana,* it may be concluded that the time when he came to the South was one when the *Pratyabhijñā* doctrines were flourishing in Kashmir.

"His time should have been several centuries anterior to the time when Meykaṇḍa Dēvar translated into Tamil, *Śivajñāna Bōdham,* a section of the *Raurava Āgama.* This characteristic of rendering into good Tamil poetry the truths of the *Āgamas* was not noticeable among Tamil scholars before his time. This was the special trait of the *Bhaktas* of the *Pratyabhijñā* school. One of them was Sōmanātha, the author of *Śiva Dṛṣṭi* (a book not yet published). This work may be considered equal in merit to *Tirumandiram.* Another was Abhinava Gupta, the author of *Paramārtha Sāram.* Tirumūlar was the predecessor of both.

"Examining the internal evidence available in the *Tirumandiram,* it is possible to judge of its date with greater precision. It is possible to conclude that

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Tirumūlar was by far posterior to the recognised authors of the six Darśanas, Gautama, Kaṇāda, Bādarāyaṇa, Kapila, Jaimini and Patañjali, because he condemns their six systems in the 18th Adhyāya of the 5th *Tantra.* Again, Tirumūlar has explained in the third chapter of the second *Tantra* the inner meaning of the *Liṅga Purāṇa,* which is held in great respect by the *Vīra Māhēśvaras.* He has also praised the two *Āgamas* called Vīram and Vātuḷam which are the chief *Āgamas* of the Vīramāhēśvaras. In the first part of the seventh *Tantra* he has brought out the rare meanings of *Ṣaḍ Sthala Vivēcana,* which is one of the cardinal tenets of the same Vīra Māhēśvaras. Thus Tirumūlar must have come after the time when the Liṅga Purāṇa and the Vīra Māhēśvara cult became very prevalent. From *Mantras* 91 and 97 it becomes clear that when Tirumūlar came from the vale of Kashmir, the Tamil sacred literature was not flourishing, and that he was created for the purpose of writing in Tamil works throwing light upon higher philosophic truths.

"From the foregoing internal evidence, one may infer that Tirumūlar came to the south roughly in the sixth century A.D.".

Dr. V. V. Ramaṇa Śāstri is an accredited authority in *Āgamānta,* and his opinion about the date of the *Tirumandiram* based upon the subject-matter of the book is therefore to be respected. It is possible to support his remarks by further examination of the book itself.



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In the 2nd *Tantra* under the heading of *Guru Nindā* there is a stanza,[3] which has an allusion to the *Pattini* cult. The poet says that those who are worshippers of *Pattini* (the goddess of chastity), those who are satisfied with a knowledge of the *Tatvas,* and those who do harm by destroying right beliefs will not live for more than a year.[4] We may take it that the *Pattini* cult was prevalent at that time. In that case, the time was not far remote from the days when Śeṅguṭṭuvan erected a temple for that deity according to the account of it in the *Śilappadikāram.*

But, we have, here and there, some hints in the *Tirumandiram,* about the nature of the temples in South India, and we can infer therefrom that they were just brick and mortar structures, only the image inside being of stone; e.g., in the 7th *Tantra,* Section 2, stanzas 8 and 9 speak of temples;—[5]

முத்துடன் மாணிக்க மொய்த்த பவளமுங்
கொத்துமக்கொம்பு சிலை நீறு கோமள
மத்தன் றன்னாகம மன்னமரிசியா
முய்த்ததின் சாதனம்பூ மணலிங்கமே.

துன்றுந்தயிர் நெய் பாறுய்ய மெழுகுடன்
கன்றிய செப்பு கனலி ரதஞ்சலம்
வன்றிறற் செங்கல் வடிவுடை வில்லம்பொன்
றென்றியங்கொன்றை தெளி சிவலிங்கமே.

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[3] No. 532.

[4] பத்தினி பத்தர்கள் தத்துவ ஞானிகள்
சித்தங் கலங்கச் சிதைவுகள் செய்தவர்
அத்தமு மாவியு மாண்டொன்றின் மாய்ந்திடும்
சத்தியமீது சதாநந்தி யாணையே.

[5] 1719; 1720.

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The meaning of the relevant portion of the first stanza is "All the following (things of the temple) constitute the Liṅga, the pearls, precious stones, the bead of corals, the *carved wood,* the stone image, the *book of Āgamas* of Śiva (Attan), the cooked and uncooked rice, etc., and the fragrance of flowers". The meaning of the phrase 'கொத்து கொட்பு' is not mine. It is the commentator's. Evidently, it means some carved part of the temple which was not stone, but wood. It might be a beam. It is the next stanza that speaks definitely of the brick. The third line has the expression 'வன்றிறற் செங்கல்' which means the strong brick. This means that the temple alluded to in the stanza was built of brick and mortar. Now, we have evidence from the Maṇḍagappaṭṭu inscription of Vicitracitta[6] that the king (Mahēndra Varman Pallava, Circa 600—630 A. D.) constructed a temple to Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, without the use of brick, timber, metal or mortar. This means that temples were constructed in stone at least as early as 600 A. D. Hence Tirumūlar refers to temples of the sixth century and earlier. That is to say that Tirumūlar could not have lived later than the sixth century A.D.

Again, the 19th section of the 2nd *Tantra* deals with the evil consequences that would result from the neglect of proper worship in the temples. The 1st stanza states that if the king removes a '*Sthāvara liṅgam*' (as opposed to a planted or *Pratiṣṭhā liṅgam*) for the purpose of planting it elsewhere, the government will suffer and the king will be visited with a

[6]Ep. Ind. Vol. XVII, p. 14.

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great disease before his death.[7] This is good evidence to show (1) that the popular notion, now current that some temples have *Svayambhu liṅgams,* or liṅgams which grew of their own accord, is well-based; and (2) that monarchs were interested, in the days of Tirumūlar, in the construction of Śiva temples. The first inference is particularly valuable in effectively disproving the theory that the Liṅga represents the phallus. The second one is more to our present purpose. Literary evidence available from the Tēvāram hymns, the *Nālāyira Prabandham,* and the *Periya Purāṇam* proves that Kō-cceṅgaṇ, a Cōḷa king, constructed seventy temples.[8]

We may therefore infer that the monarchs who succeeded Kō-cceṅgaṇ were in the habit of building temples. Some might have committed the mistake of uprooting *Svayambhu liṅgams* for the purpose of building the Śiva temple in another place. It is this that is condemned by Tirumūlar. Thus we get that Tirumūlar lived in the interval of time between Kō-cceṅgaṇ and 600 A.D. The date of Kō-cceṅgaṇ is disputed. The earlier date suggested on the strength of the note about him in the colophon of one of the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* songs is the early part of the third century A. D., or the close of the second century. The later date suggested by Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar in his Tamil book of the Pallavas is 450 A. D.[9] It is not

[7] தாவர லிங்கம் பறித்தொன் றிற்ருபித்தா
லாவதன்முன்னே யரசு கிலைகெடும்
சாவதன் முன்னே பெரு நோயடுத்திடும்

[8] Sambandar; Tiruvaikanmāḍakkōil Padigam; Sambandar; Tiruvambarperundirukkōyil Padigam.

[9] Mr. P. T. Srīnivāsa Aiyangār: Pallavas, Part I, Time-chart at beginning.

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necessary just now to say that Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar is wrong. Both the dates are early enough to fix Tirumūlar in the interval between Kō-ccengaṇ and 600 A.D.

The second stanza goes on to say that if a brick of the temple wall is removed, the crowned king (who ought to protect the temple) will fall by the sword.[10] This reference is valuable in indicating what ought to have been the monarch's function so far as the temples were concerned; for Tirumūlar is here mentioning only what was the popular view. The preservation of the temple was the duty of the king. The third stanza goes further and states that the fighting power of the kings would diminish if the *Pūjas* were not properly conducted in the Śiva temples.[11] The fourth stanza speaks in the same strain. "If the Pūja in the Śiva shrines is not well done, evil befalls the king; the fertility in the land diminishes, thefts increase". The immediately following stanza gives another interesting detail. It is to this effect:—"If the god is worshipped by one who is only in name a Brahman, the fighting sovereign will have severe disease and the country will have famine".[12] When

[10] II. 19. 2.
கட்டு வித்தார் மதிற்கல்லொன்று வாங்கிடில்
வெட்டு விக்கும் மபிடேகத்தரசரை.....

[11] *Ibid.* 3.
போற்றரு மன்னரும் போர் வலிகுன்றுவர்
கூற்றுதைத்தான் றிருக்கோயில் களானவை
சாற்றியபூசை சடப்பிடிற்றானே

[12] பேர் கொண்ட பார்ப்பான் பிரான்றனையர்ச்சித்தாற்
போர் கொண்ட வேந்தர்க்குப் பொல்லாவியாதியாம்
பார் கொண்ட நாட்டுக்குப் பஞ்சமுமா மென்றே...

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this stanza is read along with the one quoted above (No. 1719), which makes mention of the book of *Āgamas,* it is clear that the *Pūjaka* of the shrine was expected to have a good knowledge of the *Āgamas.* This in itself is an important point, since it shows that the *Āgamas* were already well-known in the Tamil country, and were also preserved by the *Pūjakas.* Another thing that we notice here incidentally is that the worshipper in the Śiva temple was a Brahman, and not any one belonging to the other castes.

From the foregoing stanzas, we get some proof to show that Tirumūlar lived in the sixth century A. D. or earliar. In section 21 of the same *Tantra,* we have a stanza which shows that there were some who regarded Śiva as an impure deity. Tirumūlar says:—"If low people disrespect Īśa, and say that he is an outcaste from the Dēva-lōka, their fate will be like that of the parrot that is torn by a cat".[13] Now Tirumūlar refers here not to Non-Hindus like Jains, Buddhists, etc., but to those who believed in the Vēdas, in the Dēva lōka, etc., but who regarded Śiva as impure. The persons so referred to could only have been the Brahmans who believed in the Smṛtis (i.e., the Smārtas), but whose orthodoxy stood in the way of their accepting the rather cosmopolitan notions of the Śaivas. That such an attitude of exclusiveness was noticeable among some Brahmans is evidenced by some passages in the *Smṛtis.* In the Uśana Samhitā, Chapter IV, verses 23 to 26, the '*Pankti Dūṣakas*' or

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[13] ........................................ அமராபதி நாடு
வெளிய னென்றீசனை நீசரிகழிற்
கிளி யொன்று பூனையாற் கீழதுவாகுமே.

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those with whom food should not be eaten are mentioned, and the Pāśupatas, etc., are definitely mentioned as heretics (Pāṣaṇḍis). The translation of the verses (as rendered by M. N. Dutt) is as follows.[14] "The following are disqualified to be present at a Śrāddha ceremony—Those who sell the *Smṛti;* those who marry widows; those who enter into a locked room without the permission of the owner; those who officiate as priests for inferior caste; those who teach unknown persons; those who give instruction on receiving fees; those who study the Vedas by paying fees —are described as *Vṛtakās.* The Śramaṇas (Buddha ascetics), Nirgūḍhās (a class of naked mendicants), those who know the doctrines of the Pāñcarātra (a sect of Vaiṣṇavas), the Jainas, the Kāpālikās, the Pāśupatās; if these and similar other *heretics,* wicked souls pervaded by the quality of *Tamas,* partake of the *havis,* the Śrāddha does not become successful, and it does not yield fruits in the next world. O! Ye leading *Viprās,* a twice-born man who does not follow an established order of life, as well as one who enters upon a false one, are to be known as *Pankti Dūṣakas,* (i.e., those who are unworthy to sit at a dinner party)".

From the above extract, it is clear that the Pāśupatas were denounced as heretics by the *Smṛti.* It is difficult to state when this Samhitā was written in its present form. Perhaps we shall not be wrong if we give the date fourth century A.D. for most of the Sanskrit sacred writings including the *Purāṇas.* At any rate, the people alluded to by Tirumūlar in the

[14] Verses 23—26.

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stanza quoted above were believers in the *Smṛtis* like the *Uśana Samhitā.*

In another place, Tirumūlar is equally severe upon people who speak ill of the Aḍiyārs or devotees of Śiva:—"Those who are the enemies of Śaiva devotees who go about begging, will fall into Hell".[15] From this stanza, we see that there were many who were Śivan Aḍiyār at the time of Tirumūlar, and that it was irreligious to speak ill of them. We know from the accounts of the Nāyanārs of the Periya Purāṇam, that numbers of people became saints because of the food they gave to these Aḍiyārs. Very probably then, Tirumūlar lived in the days of some of the earlier Nāyanārs.

We may also profitably examine one remark about South India made by Tirumūlar which may be taken as throwing light upon the time when he lived. Stanza 1646 appearing in the 6th *Tantra* runs thus:—"The five Tamil Maṇḍalas are *Tatvas* (i.e. are regions where the truths have been fully revealed); there roam wise men whose minds have blossomed (lit. loosened), and who have known the ancient truth ('ஆதியறிவு'). They have given utterance to their knowledge as easily as they would throw out water through their mouths and this knowledge has

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[15] ஆண்டானடிய வரார்க்கும் விரோதிகள்
ஆண்டானடி யவரைய மேற்றுண்பவர்
ஆண்டானடி யாரை வேண்டாது பேசினர்
தாந்தாம் விழுவது தாழ்வா நரகமே. St. 537 (மயேசுர நிந்தை—1.)

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spread over the whole of the five Tamil maṇḍalas".[16] In this stanza, Tirumūlar speaks of the spread of real knowledge in the five Tamil *maṇḍalas*. The word Maṇḍala means 'country'. The question now arises as to which were the five countries. The commentator says that the expression refers to Tamil, Telugu, Canarese, Malayāḷam and Mahratta countries. It is difficult to take that explanation as the correct one because from the epigraphical records relating to Malabar, we see clearly that the language prevailing there continued to be Tamil, at least as late as the ninth or the tenth century A. D. Further we know that Cēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār, the friend of Sundaramūrti Nāyaṇār, was the ruler of the Cēra kingdom and was one of the acknowledged Tamil poets. It is needless to state arguments in support of the view that Malayāḷam had not become a separate language till that late period. So, this classification of the Tamil country into five parts on a linguistic basis is not quite correct. The real explanation seems to be that the word Maṇḍala was the name given to an independent kingdom, and that, at the time of Tirumūlar, there were five such kingdoms in South India, where Tamil was everywhere spoken. In support of this view, we have the occurrence of the expression 'Maṇḍala Mākkaḷ' in the sense of kings, in an unidentified authority quoted by the famous commentator Aḍiyārkku Nallār when he gives the explanation of a

[16] தமிழ் மண்டல மைந்துந் தாவிய ஞானம்
உமிழ்வதுபோல வுலகந்திரிவார்
அவிழு மனமு மெம்மாதியறிவுந்
தமிழ் மண்டலமைந்துந் தத்துவமாமே, St. 1646 (VI 7. 2.)



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kind of dance known by the name of 'uḷvari'. The passage occurs in the note on line 89 in the 8th chapter of Śilappadikāram. The commentary rendered into English runs thus:—"Uḷvari is the name given to the dance in which kings dance either in their own real form, or in disguise."[17] Aḍiyārkku Nallār states in that connection that 'Maṇḍala Mākkaḷ' means 'Araśar or kings'.

The five Mandalas alluded to by Tirumūlar were Cōḷa Maṇḍala, Cēra Maṇḍala, Pāṇḍya Maṇḍala, Toṇḍai Maṇḍala and Koṅgu Maṇḍala. That there was a Maṇḍala going by the last name is evidenced by Cōḷa inscriptions of a later period. The point of importance is that Tirumūlar must have lived at a time when he Koṅgu Maṇḍalam and Toṇḍai Maṇḍalam were well established.

It is doubtful, if during the days of Śaṅgam literature there were five Maṇḍalas. We very often hear of the expression Mummuḍi Vēndar or the three crowned kings in Śangam literature and in the Tolkāppiyam. It clearly means that there were only three Maṇḍalas, or independent kingdoms at that time. The rulers of the Cēra, Pāṇḍya and Cōḷa kingdoms alone could be called *Maṇḍala Mākkaḷ* or kings. The others were called only *Kuṟu-nila-mannar*, petty chieftains or rulers, however great and powerful they might have occasionally been. But Ṭoṇḍaināḍu was fairly on its way to become a *Maṇḍala*. It was under

[17] உள்வரி யென்ப துணர்த்துங் காலை
மண்டல மாக்கள் பிறிதோருருவங்
கொண்டுங் கொள்ளாதுமா டுதற்குரித்தே.

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the rule of Toṇḍaimān Iḷam-Tiraiyan who, according to Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, was a viceroy of the imperial Cōḷas and was a near relative of the Cōḷa monarch. After the death of Iḷam-Tiraiyan, the viceroyalty passed on to Cōḷa Iḷamkiḷḷi, the younger brother of Neḍumuḍi Kiḷḷi. 'After the viceroyalty of this prince, we do not hear of Kāñcī being under the Cōḷas. It was very probably then that it passed into the hands of the Pallavas.'[18] Quite naturally therefore the name Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam came to be applied from then to the country around Kāñcī; for the Pallavas were not likely to be satified with calling themselves petty chieftains when they were independent rulers. Since the Cōḷa country in the immediate south had the name Cōḷa Maṇḍalam, the Pallava kingdom must have got the name of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. Such a name would serve the two purposes of giving independent status to the new rulers of Kāñcī and also of marking off the respective jurisdictions of the Cōḷas and the Pallavas.

A similar state of affairs must have prevailed in the Koṅgu country also. In the period of the Śangam literature, the rulers of the Koṅgu Nāḍu were not strong enough to establish a kingdom of their own big enough or strong enough to be called a Maṇḍalam. This is seen from the constant references in the Śangam literature to the defeat of the Koṅgu at the hands of the three powerful kings and also some of the Vēḷs, e.g., in

[18]Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, *Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*, p. 197.

In the Tolkāppiyam the Tamil Country is regarded as of 4 divisions including the Toṇḍamaṇḍalam, though only 3 kingdoms.—Sūtras 391—392. See also *Evolution of Hindu Administrative Institutions*, p. 12. *S. K.*

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the *Padirruppattu*, we have an account of Palyānaiccelkeḻu Kuṭṭuvan making a conquest of the Koṅgu-nāḍ and giving it away to his brother Imayavaramban. Again in the *Puranānūru*, we hear of the Cōḷa called Kurāppaḷḷittuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan defeating the Koṅgu king:—

" மயங்கு பெருந்தானைக் கொங்கு
புறம்பெற்ற கொற்ற வேந்தே " [19]

We also hear of the chieftain Āy driving away the Koṅgar as far as the western ocean.

" கொங்கர்க்குட கடலோட்டிய ஞான்றை " [20]

Since the Koṅgu kingdom lay between the Cēra and the Cōḷa kingdoms, it was natural that during the days of the powerful Cēras and Cōḷas, their fighting should have taken place in the Koṅgu country itself which would therefore be subjected to all the inconveniences of its geographical position. Thus before Śēran Śenguṭṭuvan's death, there would be no chance of the Koṅgunāḍ becoming a Koṅgu Maṇḍalam. From the *Puram* references, we get to know that there was a powerful Cēra called Māndaram Śēral Irumporai who was defeated by the great Talaiyālangānattup-Pāṇḍyan.[21] This Cēra must have been an immediate successor of Śenguṭṭuvan; but we have no account of his successors. There is even room to believe that the unity of the Cēra kingdom itself was in danger in the beginning of the third century A.D.

Thus there was scope for the petty chieftains of the Koṅgu region to rise into prominence without fear of

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[19] Puram 373, lines 8 and 9.
[20] Puram 130, lines 5 and 6.
[21] Puram 17.

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opposition from the Cēras. The condition was such that the Cōḷas also had lost all their importance. This was surely due to their antagonism with the rising power of the Paḷḷavas. There was, as pointed out above, the absorption of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam by the Paḷḷavas. This meant that the Paḷlavas were on their onward march of Southern conquest. The capture of Kāñcī would inevitably lead to the conquest of the Tanjore delta also unless it was effectively arrested. In other words, henceforth the danger was not from the Cēra on the west, but from the Pallava on the north. As long as it was the Cēra who had to be watched, the capital of Uṟaiyūr was valuable. But even the capital had now to shift to some place midway between Tanjore and Conjeevaram. That is why we find Kō-ccеṅgaṇ getting himself crowned at Cidambaram. In fact, his natural sympathies should have led him to crown himself at Tiruvānaikkā, where, according to the popular legend he had been previously born as a spider. That was also very near the old Cōḷa capital of Uṟaiyūr. On the other hand, he goes to Cidambaram and the practice begins, from his time, of the Cōḷas being crowned by the Tillai Three Thousand. Tillai had no prominence during the days of the Śaṅgam. The choice of Cidambaram, therefore ,was as important strategically, as it was religiously. But it had its own consequence. The attention of the Cōḷa was withdrawn from the Koṅgu country. The chieftains of that region were given ample opportunity of expanding themselves in the east and north. We can well imagine that the major part of Salem came to be included within the jurisdiction of the Koṅgu ruler. It was at that time,

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therefore, that the original Kuṟunila-mannan of Koṅgu established his undisputed sovereignty over what became naturally enough another Maṇḍala, called Koṅgu Maṇḍalam, equal in importance to the other four Maṇḍalas. Hence, we may conclude, that it was in the century succeeding the establishment of the Paḷḷava rule over Kāñcī, that the Koṅgu Maṇḍalam came to be formed. Accepting the date 358 A.D. usually given to Vīrakūrca Pallava, the ruler of Kāñcī, we may conclude that it also roughly marks the period when the Koṅgu Maṇḍala was formed, for Vīrakūrca was (according to Mr. Gōpālan) the grandson of Kālabhartṛ, probably the first Pallava ruler of Kāñcī. Even if we do not take the date suggested as being quite precise, we shall not be wrong in dating the period in question as the fourth century A.D.

Now the question may arise as to whether the Cēras and the Cōḷas could have been the only powers that might have stood in the way of Koṅgu expansion. There were the Gangas who were the immediate neighbours in the north. We may straightaway answer that the Gangas never troubled themselves with the Koṅgus. Dr. S. K. Aiyangar points out, "the Ganga territory lay in the Anantapur and Kōlar districts particularly, and later on extended to take in practically the whole of the Mysore District as well. with an alternative capital at Talakāḍ".[22] This means that they confined their operations to the region lying to the north of the eastern Ghats which must have served as a sufficiently effective

[22] S. K. Aiyangar, *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*, p. 189.

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barrier protecting the inroads of the Gangas into the land of the Koṅgus. The natural enemies of the Gangas were the Pallavas on their east and the Koṅkans on the west. Their relations with the former are reflected in the account that "Harivarman and Mādhavavarman were installed on the Ganga throne by Simhavarman and Skandavarman of the Pallava family".[23] The conquests of the Gangas on the Koṅkan border are indicated by the titles assumed by the earlier Ganga monarchs whose names are found in what Fleet called 'spurious' records. "Thus they (the spurious charters) give the names of Harivarman with a date in A.D. 248, of Viṣṇugōpa with a date in A.D. 351, of Avinīta Koṅgaṇi with dates in A.D. 454-55 A.D. 466, of Durvinīta Koṅgaṇi with dates in A.D. 481-2 and 513-14 and of Srī-Purusha-Prithuvi-Koṅgaṇi with the dates of A.D. 762 and 766-7."[24] Whether these names and dates are correct or not, we do have here evidence enough of the Gangas coming into conflict with and vanquishing the Koṅkans; for, the titles are sufficiently significant and speak for themselves.

Thus, it is clear that there is nothing to invalidate our inference that the Koṅgus could have risen into prominence in the fourth century A.D., so that the Koṅgu Maṇḍalam could be ranked as one of the five Maṇḍalas of the Tamil country. For our purpose, this is very valuable in as much as we can fix Tirumūlar in that period. Previously we have seen that he could not have been earlier than Kō-cceṅgaṇ. Now the lower

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[23] R. Gopalan, *Pallavas*, p. 42.

[24] Fleet, *Bombay, Gazeteer*, p. 300.

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limit becomes the fourth century A.D. As for the upper limit, we have already fixed it as the sixth century A.D.

### iii. *Tirumūlar's explanation of some Śaiva legends.*

Before proceeding to a critical examination of the contents of the *Tirumandiram*, we may notice the explanations furnished by Tirumūlar of some Śaiva legends. It is in the second *Tantra* that the poet treats of the Purāṇic legends, some of which he rationally interprets in later *Tantras* in different places. It even appears as though he took up the main legends for the purpose of giving out their esoteric significance. It was natural that at the time he was writing, there must have been many who disbelieved in mythological tales because they appeared too fanciful for the rational mind to accept. Perhaps the most fanciful of them is the story of Śiva destroying the three cities. Hence it is that we find the author mentioning in stanza 343 that the "three cities" mean the three malas or impurities.[25] Similarly when the author speaks of the legend about Agastya he takes care to explain its esoteric meaning. The legend is that the earth was being overweighted in the north because all people flocked there and so Agastya was asked by Śiva to go to the south and preserve by his weight the balance of the earth. This rather absurd account is rendered intelligible by Tirumūlar's interpretation of it. He takes the upsetting of the earth's balance to mean people's inability to preserve tran-

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[25] முப்புரஞ் செற்றனனென்பர்கண் மூடர் கண்
முப்புரமாவது மும்மலகாரியம்.

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quility. This tranquility, நடுவு நிலைமை, has been praised by him in the first *Tantra.*[26] Tirumūlar states that when God perceived that tranquility was being destroyed in the world, he ordered Agastya to go and stand before the world which he describes as "முடுகிய". This word means 'strong' and 'opposing'. The idea is that people in the world, swayed this side and that by their strong desires, were unable to see the real truth. Agastya was asked to render assistance to them so that they might have knowledge and balance of mind. Then Tirumūlar proceeds to mention that Agastya is no more than the 'shining light'. The true significance of this expression can be understood only if the Tamil expression used by the author is noted;[27] literally the stanza means that "the northern saint who raises the fire is the same as the shining light which grows everywhere and causes fertility". This expression 'Ilangu Oḷi' has a special meaning of its own, and is explained in another place. There it is called '*Ēr Oḷi*' which literally means 'beautiful' or 'shining' light. The special meaning of this expression is found in a stanza in the fourth *Tantra.*[28] It is there said to be the central Agni's light. "ஏரொளிச்சக்கரமந்நடுவன்னியே" The commentator rightly gives the meaning of *Ēroḷi* as the 'brilliant light of Agni which spreads from the *Mūlādhāra* to the *Kapāla* or the *Sahasrāra*'.[29]

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[26]Stanzas 320 to 323.

[27]St. 337.

[28]Stanza 338.

அங்கிபுதயஞ்செய் வடபாற் றவமுனி
யெங்கும் வளங்கொள் ளிலங்கொளி தானே.

[29]4th Tantra, section 5, St. 1.



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This shows that Tirumūlar means by *Ēroḷi* or *'Ilangoḷi'* the brilliance of the *Mūlāgni* or *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* which, according to the *yōga* doctrine, functions in the *Suṣumnā* canal. It is well known that real illumination is obtained only by rousing the *Kuṇḍalinī*. This can be done only by stopping the activity in the *Candra Nāḍi* and the *Sūrya Nāḍi*, i.e., the *Iḍa* (*-kalai*) and *Piṅgaḷa*, and thus opening out the *Mūlādhāra* lotus so as to liberate the *Kuṇḍalini Śakti* lying coiled there. Thus Tirumūlar intends to state that the legend about Agastya means nothing more than the grace shown to mankind by God enabling people to rouse the fire of *Kuṇḍalinī*, and Agastya means nothing more than the power which shines as *Kuṇḍalinī* in the *Suṣumnā* canal. The expression *'Naḍuvu Nilai'* is especially appropriate because it literally means 'the central position'. Now the *Suṣumnā* is in the centre between *Iḍa* and *Pingaḷa*. So when Tirumūlar states that the world loses its balance by not keeping itself in the central position he means that those who do not know the art of rousing the *Kuṇḍalinī*, or of remaining confined within the *Kuṇḍalinī*, are swayed by the *Iḍā* and the *Pingaḷa*, and thus turned worldwise instead of having their sight turned towards the god-head within. By doing the former, people who ought to be otherwise imperishable, perish; "உலகம் கெடுகின்றது" that is, the world perishes.[30]

Likewise, Tirumūlar deals with the legend about Śiva drinking the poison and keeping it in his throat. He says in stanza 521 "People do not know the

[30] Ṭiru. p. 253, note on 1255.

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real meaning of the throat (of Śiva) becoming black. People say that which was consumed was poison".[31] In this place, Tirumūlar does not take the trouble of stating what exactly was consumed by Śiva. But it is indicated in the 8th *Tantra* section 27 which has the name *Viśvagrāsa,* the swallowing of the universe. This is stated in stanza 2593;[32] which means "Śiva who swallowed the Jīvātma, Paramātma, the (lower) Śiva mentioned before, the Turiya (the four states) and all the universe which is beyond these. Śiva swallowed these like the disease which pervades the *Viḷā* (wood apple) fruit and renders it black". The next stanza states how the *Parāpara* Śiva (called also Nandi) sustains the swallowed universe in the *Meyjñānanēyāntam*;[33] it means "We do not know that the *Parāparam* (i.e. the Highest Śiva) who is the beginning and the end, swallows us along with the *Param* (the universe beyond), and sustains us in the final end of all knowable knowledge".

Interpreting these stanzas along with the stanza in the 2nd *Tantra,* we see that Tirumūlar takes the legend

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[31] கண்டங் கறுத்தது கருத்தறிவாரில்லை
உண்டது நஞ்சென் றுரைப்பர்

[32] கரியுண் விளவின் கனிபோலுயிரு
முரிய பரமுமுன் னோதுஞ் சிவமு
மரிய துரிய மேல இலமுமெல்லாந்
திரிய விழுங்குஞ் சிவபெருமானே.

[33] அந்தமு மாதியு மாகும் பராபரன்
தந்தம் பரம் பரன் றன்னிற் பரமுட
னந்தமை யுண்டு மெய்ஞ்ஞான நேயாந்தத்தே
நந்தி யிருந்த னறுமறியோமே.—(2594)

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to explain Śiva encompassing within Himself the whole universe and sustaining it. This will become clearer if we examine the earlier stanza in its context. It appears in the section called *Adhōmukha Darśanam* (lit. 'the sight of the downward bent face'). Stanza 521 referred to above has as its first line

" அண்டமொ டெண்டிசை தாங்கும் அதோ முகன் "

which means, "The downward looking Person (Śiva) who sustains the universe and the eight directions". It is seen from this that in the *Adhōmukha* condition, Śiva bears the universe which he causes to disappear (i.e., swallows) in his *ūrdhva mukha* condition. The figure of Śiva with the blackness in the throat thus represents the *Adhōmukha Śiva*—the sustainer. That is why in the legend about Śiva's swallowing the poison, the *Dēvas* and others who asked Śiva to help them when the poison appeared, requested him also not to gulp it down, for if he did that, the poison would destroy Him also. This means that Śiva of that form would be gone, and only the formless Śiva would remain. There would then be no existence for the *Dēvas* too. So Śiva retained the poison in the throat, i.e., kept the universe in its manifested state, himself undertaking the responsibility of sustaining it. Thus the blue-throated Śiva is the Adhōmukha Śiva according to the explanation of Tirumūlar.

Similarly Tirumūlar explains the real meaning of the story that Brahmā and Viṣṇu could not see the head and the feet respectively of Śiva. Stanza 2425 explains that the head means 'gñānam' and the feet represent

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'grace'.[34] It is seen from these that according to Tirumūlar, Viṣṇu could not see the Śakti or power of Śiva, and could not receive His grace. Brahmā could not have Śivagñānam. This explanation seems to be rational so far as Brahmā is concerned. Because Brahmā may be taken to represent the 'Vēda'. If we regard Śiva as the embodiment of Vēdānta (Siddhānta, etc.), He could not be seen by the Vedas. That is why we have it stated in different places that Śiva is beyond the reach of the Vēdas. The same stanza gives incidentally an explanation of the image of Naṭarāja, or the god of dance; for the meaning of the last line is "if the foot shows the gñāna, (i.e., the head) liberation (வீடு or *mukti*) is gained". In fact, the raised foot of Naṭarāja points to the head. Hence the image is intended (according to Tirumūlar's interpretation) to represent *Mukti* or final liberation.

### iv. *The Contents of the Tirumandiram.*

Analysing the subject-matter of the *Tirumandiram*, we get to know something of the religious thought prevalent in South India in the days of Tirumūlar.

The three thousand and odd stanzas of the Tirumandiram are divided into nine *Tantras* and an introduction or *Pāyiram* as it is called. It is seen that each *Tantra* deals with one separate topic, but there appears, at the outside, to be no connection between one *Tantra* and another. Yet, a keen observer may detect

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[34] காலுந் தலையு மறியார் கலதிகள்
காலந்தச்சத்தி யருளென்பர் காரணம்
பாலொன்று ஞானமே பண்பார் தலையுயிர்
கால்ந்த ஞானத்தைக்காட்ட வீடாமே.

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the unity of thought that lies concealed in the whole book. The first *Tantra* begins with an '*Upadēśam*' or 'teaching' which is too abstruse for the general reader to correctly comprehend. The rest of it is concerned with certain rules of ethics, morality and religion—such as abstaining from vices like killing, meat-eating, sexual passion, drinking, on the one hand; and the cultivation of the virtues of showing respect for fire rites and for true Brahmans, the developing of universal love, the offering of alms, the acquisition of knowledge from books and learned men, and the preserving of equanimity of mind. The second *Tantra* gives in a nutshell some accounts found in the Śiva Purāṇas and the Itihāsas;—such as the story of Agastya's advance to the south, the eight valiant deeds of Śiva, the appearance of the Liṅga, the sacrifice of Dakṣa and the *Pralaya*. It then goes on to enumerate the five-fold functions of Śiva namely, creation, preservation, destruction, concealment and blessing. The same *Tantra* deals with the three-fold classification of *Jīvas* into *Vijñānakaḷar*, *Sakaḷar* and *Praḷayākaḷar*, and proceeds to state which people are deserving of respect and which are not; how sacred places are in the mind, how wicked it is to demolish temples, to slight Śiva, the Guru and Māhēśvara; and how necessary it is to remember that it is "the downward bent face" of the Supreme that sustains the universe and the eight directions. It ends with an appeal to practise endurance and seek the help of the spiritually great. The third *Tantra* is, by itself, a complete treatise on Yōga; but it is not Patañjali's system that is explained. Tirumūlar's account of it is

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far more comprehensive, and far more difficult to comprehend. It is evident that he has made a science of his own personal experiences which may perhaps reveal themselves to the adept in the art. He starts with an account of the eight-limbed Yōga (*Aṣṭāṅga Yōga*), and deals at length with *Yama, Niyama* and the rest, and concludes that part by mentioning the fruits that can be realised by going through each of these eight practices:—Through *Yama* one gains the blessing of Umā and reaches *Amarāpati; Niyama* confers upon him *Śivapadam;* by *Āsana* he will hear *Nādam;* by *Prāṇāyāma,* he reaches the stage in which all the *Dēvas* begin to praise him; by *Pratyāhāra,* he gains the form of Śiva, and the Dēvas become confounded because they cannot differentiate him from Śiva; by *Dhāraṇa,* he becomes enabled to go everywhere including the worlds of Brahmā and Viṣṇu. In fact, he can walk into any place just as one can on earth. By *Dhyāna,* he reaches the abode of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, and Indra. Lastly by *Samādhi* he releases himself from all the *Upādhis* and unites with *Tatparam*. After thus finishing the description of the *Yōga,* the state of the 16 *Kalas,* the science of conquering one's own body, the wheel of time, etc., the three great *Yōgas* called *Khēcari* and *Paryanka* and *Candra* are expounded in order. Thus this *Tantra* is an exposition of Yōga as Tirumūlar conceived it. The fourth *Tantra,* likewise is a practical exposition of the *Mantra Śāstra* or the *Upāsanā Mārga.* It deals with the great *Ajapā Mantra* and the *Bhairavī Mantra,* and has very much to say about some cakras like *Ṭiruvambala-cakra, Tripura-cakra, Ēroḷi-cakra,*

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*Bhairava-cakra, Bhuvanāpati-cakra* and *Navākṣarī-cakra.* It describes also what is called the *Pūrṇa Śakti.* From the manner in which the whole subject-matter is dealt with, one can readily perceive that the whole teaching is esoteric.

The fifth *Tantra* is much more intelligible than the rest, and is a general description of the different forms of Śaivism. First, there is a mention of the four forms which he respectively calls Śuddha Śaivam, Aśuddha Śaivam, Mārga Śaivam and Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivam (or extremely pure Śaivam). Then the poet gives an account of the four *Sādhanas* (or means), i.e., *Caryā, Kriyā, Jñāna* and *Yōga.* Later, he mentions what exactly is *sanmārga* or the true path. This true path is then divided into its three aspects, the *Sakhā Mārgam,* (in which God is conceived of as a friend), the *Satputra Mārga* (in which God is regarded as a parent), and *Dāsa Mārga* (where the Lord is thought of as a master). Next come the four realisations, *Sālōka* or living in the world of the Lord; *Sāmīpya* or proximity to the Lord; *Sārūpya* or attaining equality with the Lord in form; and *Sāyujya* or union with the Lord. After this, the poet speaks of the descent of the *Śakti* (or Divine grace) in four forms, *Manda, Mandatara, Tīvra* and *Tīvratara.* The *Tantra* ends with a condemnation of the alien *Mārgas* (*Puṟaccamayam*) and *Nirācāram* (bad conduct), and the approval of the inside *Mārgas* or (*Uṭcamaya*).

The 6th *Tantra* is perhaps the most valuable part of the book for ordinary people. It deals with *Śiva-Guru*

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*Darśana* (the sight of Śiva as the Guru); the attainment of His feet (grace), the meaning of knowledge; the knower and the known; detachment and penance; the needlessness of penance for a certain class of people; knowledge that springs from grace; people who bear the marks of sin, of penance, of *Gñāna,* and of Śiva; the *Tantra* ends with a description of worthy and unworthy persons.

The seventh *Tantra* opens with a description of the six *Cakras* or *Ādhāras,* and the traditional account of the petals etc. in these 'lotuses'. The poet also introduces the six *adhvas* well known to students of the Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy. Then comes a description of the six *liṅgas, Aṇḍa Liṅga, Piṇḍa Liṅga, Sadāśiva Liṅga, Ātma Liṅga, Jñāna Liṅga,* and *Śiva Liṅga.* From the manner of their exposition, the poet implies that these *Liṅgas* are taken to mean the characteristics by which the *Aṇḍa* (the universe), *Piṇḍa* (the body), *Sadāśiva* &c. are to be recognised and understood. After that comes a section '*Sampradāya*' so named obviously for the reason that it mentions the special religious teaching given to Tirumūlar by his preceptor Nandi. The two succeeding sections deal with the special grace shown to Tirumūlar and the illumination he had thereby. Then there is a description of the worship that ought to be rendered to the Śiva of the heart, to Śiva conceived of as the Guru, and to Mahēśvara. Next follows a section dealing with the greatness of the *Aḍiyārs.* But it is not ordinary devotees that are here alluded to. They are the constant attendants rendering service to the Lord in His presence. Then there is a section about alms-



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taking. The next deals with the different *mudras*. The poet then proceeds to speak about the worlds reached by different classes of *yōgis* on their death, and about the manner of interning their bodies. He passes on to an abstruse description of the *Bindu* (or the dot) and its evolutes, and the manner of conquering them. This portion is bound to be unintelligible to the uninitiated. The next section deals with five sorts of *Ādityas,* and is intended to be a practical teaching to the *yōgis* who wish to realise the truth through the control of the *Iḍā* and *Piṅgaḷa Nāḍis* in the body. Then follows an account of the *Ātman,* in the six forms of *Prāṇa, Puruṣa, Aṇu* (atom), *Jīva, Paśu* and the *bōdha.* This leads on to a discussion on the manner of subduing the five *Indriyas,* and to a description of the true *Guru.* The concluding sections are apparently intended as an appeal to people to follow the true path and gain knowledge.

The eighth *Tantra* has in its first section a detailed account of the five-fold constitution of the body; in the second, the way of withdrawing oneself from the body so as to enter into the *Śivam;* and in the third a very elaborate description of the eleven *Avasthas* or conditions. This last contains some of the fundamental teachings of all forms of *Śaiva Siddhānta.* The fourth section deals with *Gñānōdayam* or the dawn of knowledge. It is when we come to the fifth which deals with the six conclusions that we get a glorified account of *Siddhānta,* and its relation to the other schools and doctrines. The next section demonstrates how *Pati, Paśu,* and *Pāśa* are essentially one. Then follows a

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rational explanation of the Purāṇic legend about the inability of Brahmā and Viṣṇu to see the head and the feet of Śiva. After this, we have accounts of 'groups of three'—the three faults, the three *padas* (*Tat, Tvam* and *Asi*), the three *parās* (beyonds), the three *Turīyas* (or fourth states), the three *muktis* or liberations, the three *Svarūpas,* the three *Karaṇas* (inner organs of perception), the three *Śūnyas* or vacuums and the three deserts (mup-pāḻ). This is succeeded by an account of the *Kārya* and *Kāraṇa Upādhis* (effect and cause limitations). Then comes *Upa Śāntam* (tranquility). The next section is an exhortation not to speak ill of Śiva. The next one is a vivid description of the lotus of the heart, the seat of the gods. Then comes the account of the *Navābhimāni,* or the nine-fold ego in the nine states (i.e., *Jīva Jāgra, Jīva Svapna, Jīva Suṣupti, Para Jāgra, Para Svapna, Para Suṣupti, Śiva Jāgra, Śiva Svapna* and *Śiva Suṣupti*). Later on, there is an examination of the *Mahā Vākyas, Tatvamasi* and *Aham Brahmāsmi.* This is succeeded by a section entitled *Viśvagrāsam* or the swallowing of the world. The other topics dealt with in this *Tantra* are truth-speaking, conquest of desire, cultivation of devotion, aiming at liberation and purification.

The first few sections of the ninth *Tantra* deal with the sight of the *Guru's maṭham* and the *Guru,* the *Praṇava, Sthūla, Sūkṣma* and *Ati Sūkṣma Pañcākṣaras.* Then the poet goes on to describe the different kinds of divine dances, e.g., the dance of *Śivānanda,* of *Sundara,* of the golden temple, of the golden *Tillai* (Cit), and of wonder. There he is evidently

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giving expression to the Divine bliss gained by people like himself. The rest of the *Tantra* is devoted to an account of the attainment of *Ākāśa*, the budding up of knowledge, the bliss of true knowledge, the vision of one's own real form, the sight of Śiva and the realisation of His true form, the state of liberation, the great *Śūnyam* or *Void*, the *Samādhi* of silence. The book closes with some praises of God and a description of the All-pervading.

### v. *The Purpose of the Tirumandiram.*

The foregoing lengthy account of the contents of the *Tirumandiram* has been given with the object of making clear the underlying unity of thought in the book that would otherwise escape the reader's attention. The object of the author is seen to be to give a thorough account of all the great paths pursued by his contemporaries or predecessors to attain *Mukti*, and at the same time, to establish the superiority of the *Sanmārga* or the *Siddhānta* path. From the manner of his exposition of the different *Mārgas*, it is clear that he was master of every one of them, not only in theory, but in actual practice. This renders his opinions all the more valuable for the *Śaiva Siddhāntin*, since he has one of the most competent authorities, if not the most competent authority, on his side. If this was not Tirumūlar's motive in writing the *Tirumandiram*, there would be absolutely no need for him to go into the intricate and almost incomprehensible details about the different paths.

Now, let us examine in brief the various paths described by him. The first book (*Tantra*) deals with

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merely the general qualifications needed for one to enter upon the path of realisation; for, it speaks of the ethical, moral and religious rules. The second treats of the Purāṇic legends, some of which he rationally explains in the later *Tantras* in different places.

The third and the fourth *Tantras* deal with *Yōga* and *Mantrōpāsana* respectively. It is clear that there were two paths which had assumed great prominence during his time. The former was a very old path, and consequently must have had several accretions during the long process of time which elapsed between the time of Patañjali and the days of Tirumūlar. That, perhaps, accounts for the various new features in the *Yōga* path as expounded by Tirumūlar. As for the latter, though one cannot be certain about the date of its origin, it had captured the minds of the people in the early centuries of the Christian era, if not earlier. It had become widely prevalent in South India also as is seen by the references to *Durgā*[35] in the *Śilappadikāram*. The influence of *Śākta* doctrines has been felt throughout India from the earliest times. We may say that the influence became particularly pronounced when special *mantras* came to be made for the worship of special deities; for all such *mantras* have what are known as *Anga Nyāsas* and *Kara Nyāsas* or certain prescribed formulae to be pronounced and certain mystic touches to be made with the hand in different parts of the body, for the purpose of preventing invisible *Śaktis* from doing harm to the worshipper, and thus disturbing him

[35]Śila. Canto XII; Canto XXIII. ll. 107 & 181, etc.

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when he is engaged in meditation. The most popular of all Kāḷidāsa's religious writings is his prayer called *Śyāmaḷā Daṇḍakam* addressed to the goddess, *Śyāmaḷā.* There She is described as having four arms, bearing the Pāśa, Aṅkuśa, Puṣpa, and Bāṇa and as residing in Maṇidvīpa, in the midst of a forest of *vilva* trees, etc. Kāḷidāsa lived, as we know, not later than the fourth century A.D. In fact, *Śakti* worship in its general aspects, as distinct from the special cults developed by *Śāktas* has always been a part of Śiva worship. Tirumūlar has, therefore, examined it in all its aspects and estimated its spiritual value at its true worth. He does not feel convinced that these two paths, however valuable as subsidiary *mārgas* to the *Siddhānta* path, can by any means replace it. Hence it is that he proceeds in the next *Tantra* to a discussion of *Śaivism* in its general aspects.

We do not find him dealing separately with *Nyāya, Tarka* and *Mīmāmsā,* as he has done with *Mantra* and *Yōga Mārgas,* and we may therefore, conclude that these *Darśanas* could not have been regarded, by the people of his age, as practical paths to be trodden by people seeking Self-realisation. This does not mean however that these *Darśanas* were not objects of study, or even of esteem. They must have been studied for their theoretical as well as disciplinary value. We notice in the Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya by Śankara (who lived at least a century later than Tirumūlar) that he examines the teachings of *Nyāya, Pūrva Mīmāmsā,* etc., to establish the importance of the Advaita philosophy. This is evidence to prove that these schools of

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philosophy did have adherents in his time, as they do have even in the present day. Yet, it is highly doubtful whether any one could have made the teachings, embodied therein, articles of religious faith. Excepting perhaps the materialists, called '*Lokāyatas*' in technical parlance, there was no Hindu who did not from the earliest times have faith in one God or another. That was the reason why Tirumūlar did not trouble himself to give an exposition of their teachings.

The question now arises as to whether there was not Vaiṣṇavism in the land which had its own adherents like Śaivism. Obviously there was. The earlier Vaiṣṇava *Āḻvārs* must have been contemporaries of Tirumūlar. If so, why does not Tirumūlar have a word to speak of Vaiṣṇavism, either in approval or in condemnation? The reason seems to be that there was absolutely no hostility between the two. There is plenty of evidence to prove it. In almost all the Purāṇas, we have in some place or other accounts of Śiva worshipping Viṣṇu, and *vice versa*. The name of Śiva is introduced as one of Viṣṇu's names in almost all the Sahasranāmas of Viṣṇu and, likewise, the name of Viṣṇu is included in the string of thousand names recited in praise of Śiva. Kings were worshippers of both gods and built temples for both; e.g., even in the days of Śēran Śeṅguṭṭuvan, we find the king accepting *Prasādam* from both Śiva and Viṣṇu temples.[36] Again, in Śilappadhikāram Chapter XI, line 130, the devotee is asked to have *equal* reverence for the

[36] Śilappadhikāram XXVI, ll. 62, 30; ll. 52, 135.

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Pañcākṣara of Śiva and the Aṣṭākṣara of Viṣṇu.[37] Kō-cceṅgaṉ built temples for both Śiva and Viṣṇu. Purāṇic legends give accounts of Śiva receiving assistance in critical situations from Viṣṇu and *vice versa.* The Śiva and Viṣṇu Purāṇas introduce the names of the same Ṛṣis, as being the chosen devotees of Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively. The four great sages Sanaka, Sanatkumāra, Sanandana and Sanātana furnish an instance in point. Nārada is another; and there are many others. There are also found some temples in which the image of the god is a combination of Śiva on one side and Viṣṇu on the other. The most notable example of it is the god of Tirupati. Pēyāḻvār describes that god most beautifully, in the manner in which he evidently saw him in his days.[38] "The descending *Jaṭā* (braided hair) and the tall crown, the shining axe and the discus, the encircling serpent and the gold waistband, are seen. So my lord of the sacred mount (Tirupati) surrounded by overflowing streamlets has united in Himself both the forms". This is a very convincing piece of evidence to show that he who erected the image there had the conception of only one God who could appear in the two forms of Viṣṇu

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[37] Śil. XI, ll. 128-130.

அருமறை மருங்கி னைந்தினு மெட்டினும்
வருமுறை பெழுத்தின் மந்திரமிரண்டு
மொருமுறை யாக வுளங் கொண்டோதி.

[38] 3rd Tiruvandāti, St. 63.

தாழ் சடையும் நீள்முடியும் ஒள் மழுவும் சக்கரமும்
சூழரவும் பொன்னாணும் தோன்றுமால்—சூழும்
திரண்டருவி பாயும் திருமலை மேலெந்தைக்கு
இரண்டுருவு மொன்றா யிசைந்து.

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and Śiva. All those who went to the temple for worship could not but have imbibed the teaching thus silently but effectively given about the essential one-ness of the two great divinities. At the present day, the Tirupati temple is visited every day by a much larger number of people than any other temple in South India. That is incontrovertible proof of the popularity that the temple enjoyed from the remotest days in the past. Thus the bulk of the people in the country, at least in the time of Pēyāḻvār and Tirumūlar, must have been perfectly aware of the fact that Viṣṇu and Śiva were but two names for one and the same god who showed Himself in two forms and discharged dissimilar duties in those separate forms.

The very same fact is further evidenced by a stanza of Poygai Āḻvār. The stanza runs:[39] "(His) name is Hara (Śiva) and Nārāyaṇa; (his) conveyance the Bull and the Bird (Garuḍa); (his) literature is the hidden lore and its commentary (Veda is, in Tamil, called 'Maṟai' which literally means 'that which is hidden'); (his) residence is the mountain and the water; the work done is destruction and protection; the weapon held in the hand is the spear and the discus; His form is that of fire and black cloud; but He is one". Here we see from the last two words மேனி ஒன்று (body is one), that he is referring to

[39] Iyaṟpā—1st Tiruvandādi, St. 5.

அரன் நாரணன் நாமம் ஆன் விடை புள்ளூர்தி
உரை நூல் மறை யுறையும் கோவில் —வரைநீர்
கருமம் அழிப்பு அளிப்புக்கையது வேல்நேமி
உருவமெரி கார் மேனி யொன்று.



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the unity between Viṣṇu and Śiva. Clearly the poet refers to some image of Śaṅkara-nārāyaṇa like that described by Pēyāḻvār in Tirupati.

In this connection, it may be also noticed that at the time of Nammāḻvār, who, it is believed, lived later than the earlier Āḻvārs (Poygai, Pūtam, and Pēy) the Vaiṣṇavas were having the same caste-mark that the Śaivas then had, and have even now, that is, the sacred ashes. This is most unmistakably referred to by Nammāḻvār in two stanzas of the *Tiruvāymoḻi*. One of them states that Viṣṇu was wearing sacred ashes, and the other says the same thing of the Vaiṣṇava Āḻvārs, then called Aḍiyārs, like the Śaiva Aḍiyārs. That, again is another common point between the two schools. The 6th stanza of the 5th *Tiruvāymoḻi* in the 4th ten[40] runs thus; "The beautiful Kṛṣṇa on whose black body a little of the white ashes is rubbed". The 7th stanza of the 4th *Tiruvāymoḻi* in the 4th ten runs;[41] "This Tiru (or Lakshmi, the consort of Viṣṇu) is so mad that she will say that all creation is Kṛṣṇa's, and will run to welcome those who besmear themselves with sacred ashes, saying that they are the Bhaktas of Viṣṇu".

This being so, how does it happen that the Śaivas, not excluding Tirumūlar go on mentioning that Śiva is

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40 கரிய மேனி மிசை வெளிய நீறு சிறிதேயிடும்
பெரிய கோலத்தடங்கண்ணன்

41 ஏறிய பித்தினொடு எல்லா வுலகும் கண்ணன் படைப்பென்னும்
நீறு செவ்வே யிடக்காணில் நெடுமா லடியா ரென்றோடும்
.........................................இத்திருவே,

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incapable of being seen completely by Brahmā and Viṣṇu? The other Āḻvārs also frequently mention something or other to show that Viṣṇu is superior to Śiva. In fact Tirumaḻiśai Āḻvār (who might have lived a little later than Tirumūlar and a little earlier than Appar) goes to the length of saying that those who believed in Śiva were men of inferior understanding.[42] The explanation is quite simple. Both the Vaiṣṇavas and the Śaivas had more or less the same general notions about the highest God-head. The only difference is that while the Śaivas gave the name Śiva to the Supreme God, the Vaiṣṇavas called Him, Viṣṇu. The Śaivas developed the theory a little further and postulated the existence of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra as subordinate deities who discharged the functions of creation, preservation and destruction in accordance with the orders of the Supreme Being. The Vaiṣṇavas did not theorise in that fashion, though they also were not unaware of the difference subsisting between God in his manifestation as the Supreme Power, and God in his lower manifestations. Whenever they wanted to emphasise this difference, they introduced Viṣṇu in the form of the Viśvarūpa or the 'Universe form'. In fact, even Tirumūlar is obliged to resort to the same expedient when he makes mention of the Supreme Śiva. Not having any form, he has to describe Him in some manner which would be intelligible and so calls Him

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[42] அறியார் சமணர் அயர்த்தார் பௌத்தர்
சிறியார் சிவப்பட்டார் செப்பில்

Nānmukan Tiruvandādi, St. 6.

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"the universe-swallower" and speaks of that action as *Viśvagrāsam.*[43]

In proof of the above, we have several stanzas written by the Āḻvārs. Poygai Āḻvār himself says:[44] 'the Highest are three; of the three, the first is the ocean-coloured (Viṣṇu)'. This stanza appears in the same *Andādi* in which he has previously identified[45] Viṣṇu, and Śiva. Thus it is clear that the Āḻvār means that ordinarily Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are of equal rank; but Viṣṇu is the greatest also. The Śaiva would say just the same of Śiva. Again, Pūdattāḻvār says of Viṣṇu "You are not of any one form; your form is brilliance; people in the two worlds will say that you have two forms—one is the first".[46] Here the poet distinctly refers to the commonly known Viṣṇu and the Supreme Being which is the beginning of everything.

When we realise this, we can easily perceive that the Śaivas' statements in apparent disparagement of Viṣṇu refer to the lower manifestation of Viṣṇu. The same applies to the similar statements of the Vaiṣṇavas about Śiva.

If then there was so much concord, why should predominance be given to Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively

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[43] Tantra 8, Section 27.

[44] முதலா வார் மூவரே யம்மூவருள்ளும்
முதலா வான் மூரி நீர் வண்ணன். Iyaṟpā, 1st Tiruvandādi, St. 15.

[45] St. 5.

[46] ஒருருவ னல்லை ஒளியுருவம் நின்னுருவம்
ஈருருவ மென்பர் இருநிலத்தோர்—ஒருருவம்
ஆதியாம்... ........1. Iyaṟpā 2nd Tiruvandādi, St. 60.

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by the two classes of Bhaktas? The answer is that it was due to the fundamental difference in temperament between man and man. To one, the terrible, the horrid, the gruesome makes a tremendous appeal. Beauty, sweetness and love can alone prevail with another. Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār, a Śaiva Saint, revels in the description of the horrid when praising of Śiva. "The burning ground in which God delights to dance, is filled with the fleshy white heads of corpses which lie hidden by the eagles that flock about them, and which the jackals eat with relish, raising a howl at intervals. Kites hover around them and the owl stares on while its male drives it away. The Ōri (a corpse-eating quadruped) rejoices".[47] Repulsive indeed must be such a sight. Yet it makes its appeal to the saint who is by no means a person of vulgar tastes. It is the very same person who says elsewhere:

"Those who see with love can see Hara, the originator of the universe, as Jyōtis (brilliance) in their heart".[48] The frightful is distasteful to others who will

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[47] 11th Tirumuṟai, Mūtta Tiruppadigam, 3.

புட்கள் பொதுத்த புலால் வெண் டலையைப் புறமே நரிசவ்வ
வட்கென்றழைப்ப வாந்தை வீச வருகே சிறு கூகை
யுட்கவிழிக்க வூமன் வெருட்ட வோரி கதித்தெங்கும்
பிட்கநட்டம் பேணு மிறைவன் பெயரும் பெருங்காடே.

[48] 11th Tirumuṟai. Aṟpudattiruvandādi, St. 18

.......................... காதலாற்—காண்பார்க்குச்
சோதியாய்ச்சிந்தையுள்ளே தோன்றுமே தொல்லுலகுக்
காதியாய் நின்றவரன்.

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like Arjuna ask God to show His pleasing form.[49] "I am glad to see the form till now unseen; yet through fear is my mind distressed. O god! kindly show me your previous form, O, the abode of the Universe! I desire to see you as before with your crown, the sceptre and the discus in your hand. O! Universe-bodied, thousand-armed! Show me your old form of four arms".[49] Yet, it must be noted that Arjuna was no coward. He had to do his fighting with Śiva to get his Pāśupata weapon. The truth is that neither fear nor love has anything to do with the terrible or mild forms. Higher feelings are aroused in some through repulsive forms and in others through beautiful and mild forms. The Śaivas belong to the first class, and the Vaiṣṇavas to the second. The former attach greater prominence to pain in the world and therefore desire release from it. Hence they meditate upon Śiva as the destroyer of the pain-giving universe, and as the God who removes them from it so that He may take them to the land of Bliss. On the other hand, the latter pay greater attention to the good things in the world of God's own creation. Because they have seen happiness in this world which is after all limited bliss, they pray to the Supreme Lord that sustains the universe, to take them

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[49]Adṛṣṭa pūrvam hṛṣitosmi dṛṣṭvā
bhayena ca pravyathitam mano me
Tadeva me darśaya devarūpam
prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa||
Kiriṭinam gadinam cakrahastam
icchāmi tvām draṣṭumaham tathaiva
Tenaiva rūpeṇa caturbhujena
Sahasrabāho bhava viśvamūrte||

*Bhag. Gītā*, XI. 45, 46.

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to the land of unlimited bliss. Roughly speaking these are the general differentiating characteristics between the two classes of Bhaktas. More should not be made of these remarks than is needed to bring out the contrast in the two ways of looking at the world.

Thus it is seen that Tirumūlar seeks to establish the superiority of 'Śaivam' to every other path current in the country during his days.

vi. *The Śaivism of Tirumūlar.*

In the 5th *Tantra,* Tirumūlar explains Śaivam. The first point that strikes one as noteworthy in his treatment of the subject is that while he devotes the first four sections to an account of four forms of Śaivam called respectively *Suddha Śaivam, Aśuddha Śaivam, Mārga Śaivam* and *Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivam,* later writers on Śaiva Siddhānta do not make such a distinction. They do make a similar classification when they speak of *Puṟappuṟa Samayam, Puṟa Samayam, Ahappuṟa Samayam* and *Aham* (e.g. Śiva Gñāna Siddhiyār—Pāyiram-Poḷippurai). But they are not the classes referred to by Tirumūlar. This matter is particularly valuable in enabling us to understand something about the nature of Śaivism in his days, and also about the time when he should have lived. So, we shall enquire into it in some little detail.

By *Aśuddha Śaivar,* Tirumūlar apparently refers to those who were worshippers of Śiva, but who were not entitled to respect, because they were inferior to the *Sanmārga Śaivas.* In stanzas 1423 and 1424 he

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describes them. "They wear two *kuṇḍalas* (or ear ornaments), they besmear themselves with sacred ashes, and wear *Rudrākṣa* beads, a necklace, and observe the rules of *Caryā* and *Kriyā*. They receive *Upadēśam* after purification and will be chanting the instructed *mantras*".[50] It is the very same people that are referred to in stanza 1435 as Śaivas whose '*Upāya* (means of realisation) is quite ordinary because their *Siddhānta* is devoid of *Vēdānta*'[51] What the poet implies here is that they do not have the knowledge which can be gained by a study of the Vēdānta. The *Śuddha Śaivas*, on the other hand, are those whose belief in Śaivism originates in a knowledge of the *Vēdānta*. Hence Tirumūlar says that '*Vēdāntam* is *Śuddha Śaiva Siddhānta*'.[52] Their doctrine is stated in a nutshell in stanza 1420;[53] "They see *Sat, Asat* and *Sat-Asat;* they do not mix up *Cit* and *Acit;* they keep

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50 "இணையார் திருவடியேத்துஞ் சீரங்கத்
திணையார்இணைக்குழை யீரணைமுத்திரை
குணமாரிணைக்கண்டமாலை யுங்குன்று
தணைவாஞ் சரியை கிரியை யினார்க்கே. St. 1423.

காதுப்பொன்னார்ந்த கடுக்கனிரண்டு சேர்த்
தோதுந் திருமேனியுட் சட்டிரண் டுடன்
சோதனை செய்து வுபதேச மார்க்கரா
யோதியிருப் பாரொரு சைவராகுமே. St. 1424.

51 வேதாந்த மில்லாத சித்தாந்தங் கண்டுளோர்
சாதாரண மன்ன சைவருபாயமே. St. 1435.

52 வேதாந்தம் சுத்தம் விளங்கிய சித்தாந்தம்." St. 1422.

53 சத்தும சத்துஞ் சத்த சத்துந்தான் கண்டு
சித்துமசித்துஞ் சேர் வுறுமே நீத்த
சுத்த மசுத்தமுந் தோய் வுறுமே நின்று
நித்தம் பரஞ்சுத்த சைவர்க்கு நேயமே. St. 1420.

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*Śuddham* and *Aśuddham* separate. For them the object to be known is *Nityam* and *Param*". The meaning of this stanza is that they see the distinction between *Pati, Pāśam* and *Paśu;* they prevent *Avidyā* or *Acit* from corrupting their knowledge, *cit;* they do not allow impure *Māya* to get mixed up with pure *Māya;* and the characteristics of the *Pati,* according to them are eternity and 'beyond-ness'. (*Aparā* is of the universe, and *Parā* is beyond the universe).

The *Mārga Śaivas* are those who follow the *Sanmārga.* According to Tirumūlar, they accept the utility of golden Śaiva ornaments (the kuṇḍala, etc.) and of the sacred ashes, as *sādhana* or means of realisation; but the real *Sādhana* of the *Sanmārga Śaiva* is that knowledge which will not lead astray, i.e., into bad *mārgas* or paths.[54] Perhaps Tirumūlar intends to say in this stanza that the wearing of the *kuṇḍala,* etc., will lead to the realisation of the importance of the *Sanmārga*; i.e., the *Aśuddha Śaivas* will, in due course, become *Sanmārga Śaivas,* and then they would attach greater importance to *gñāna* than to their externals. The faultless *gñāni* is he who attains *Jīvan-mukti* by imbibing the knowledge contained in the *Siddhānta* indicated by the *Vēdānta.* He is the great among the wise; he is attached to *Śuddha Śaiva,* and he becomes the eternal being.[55] The *Āgamas* are twenty-eight in number; they came from the nine manifestations of *Rudra.* They do not create delusion. They are divided into three parts (*Karma, Upāsana* and *Gñāna*). But

[54]St. 1427.
[55]St. 1428.



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they contain the one imperishable truth and that is *Vēdānta Siddhānta*. It is pure Śaivism.[56] *The caryā* of the *Gñāni* is to prevent his mind (சிந்தை) from paying heed to the great (*Siddhi*-giving) yōga, and, transforming it into Śiva, to stand in the true path by fixing it upon the Śiva Yōga which will give *Kaivalya*.[57] The *Siddhānta Siddhi* is to become the one, the two and the none, to stand as the one, to refrain from condemning different paths, and to become Śiva by following the path shown by the *Parāpara Śakti* (the grace of Śivam as *Parāparam*).[58]

From the manner in which Tirumūlar has spoken about *Śuddha Śaivam* and *Mārga Śaivam*, it is clear that what he has in his mind is that *real Śaiva Siddhānta* is to be based upon the *Vedānta;* but it has to be rendered practical by following the *Sādhanas* of *Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga* and *Gñāna* (of which the last is the most important), and by receiving the grace of God. This 'grace' of god, he describes later on as *Śakti Nipāta*.

As for the *Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivas,* Tirumūlar describes them as "people who do not have the external characteristics of Śaivas, who have no outward show; but going straight to *Vikṛtam* (or *Śiva*) destroy their bondage of desires, annihilate the pain-giving *Pāśam* and *Paśutvam,* and attain the knowledge of Śiva.[59] They do not stay in the halting places marked out by *Śuddha Śaivas;* to them the inner truth of the word of freed

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[56] St. 1429.
[57] St. 1434.
[58] St. 1436.
[59] St. 1438.

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souls (*muktas*) is the seed which grows into the tree of *Mukti*. Such souls cross the bar and become pure *Śivam*.[60] They cannot be spoken of as "He or I".[61] When they reach the *Tatva* which is beyond expression, the inexpressible five (*Indriyas*) subside; superior knowledge will shine like the flame of a lamp and their state will be *Para Sāyujya*".[62]

The glorious description of the "severe Pure Śaivas" applies to a class of people about whom there is no mention in later *Śaiva Siddhānta* literature. The reason is obvious. The later literature was concerned only with the *Sanmārga* or the good path of *Śaiva Siddhānta*. This path had nothing to do with the *Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivas* who were beyond it. Very probably there was no one who could be termed such. The description, it is evident, applies to those *Śaiva* saints of the Periya Purāṇam, who obtained the grace of God, spiritual illumination and final *mukti*, not by following any one of the paths. Many of the Periya Purāṇa saints had the high quality of devotion which led them on to infinite bliss without their subjecting themselves to the discipline of any *Śaiva* path. But what is to be said of Sambandar who gained illumination, if the story be true, in his third or fourth year? His was too tender an age to make him understand what *Bhakti* meant. All that can be said of him with certainty is that he was a *Kaḍum Śuddha Śaiva*. So were Kaṇṇappa and Śākya Nāyanār.

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60St. 1440.
61St. 1441.
62St. 1442.

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Since Tirumūlar has given his opinion of this class of Śaivas, it becomes easy for us, at this distance of time, to understand why many of the 63 Nāyanārs were given the high position of saints. From the accounts we have of them, we find in the case of many of them apparently nothing really valuable or great. One commits the most hideous deed of cooking up his son to feed a Śaiva devotee. Another chops off the nose of a queen for the simple mistake of smelling a flower intended for the worship of Śiva. A third goes on lighting the hair of his head when he was too poor to purchase oil for a lamp before the god. A fourth burns himself to death when he realises that one of his soldiers has killed a Śaiva. In fact, the majority of the great Nāyanārs are, from the materialistic point of view, huge fools. But if that is to be our verdict upon them, it is in reality a verdict upon the whole body of Śaivas who have been, during all these twelve centuries and more, 'foolish' enough to regard those 'absurd' individuals as holy men, next, in point of reverence, only to God Śiva Himself. Thanks to Tirumūlar, it becomes now clear that these great personages were known in their days to be great souls who could at one leap transcend conventions of morality, ethics and religious doctrine, and gain, by means unknown to us, the grace of God.

The fact that these *Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivas* are not mentioned in later literature while they are mentioned by Tirumūlar, leads to the inference that Tirumūlar lived at a time when he could see some of them and

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could hear of others.[63] This confirms our conclusion, arrived at on other grounds, that he lived in the fourth, fifth or sixth century A. D.

In the four sections immediately following, the poet speaks of the four *Sādhanas, Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga* and *Gñāna,* and therein he incidentally alludes to three kinds of *Dīkṣas*:—Samaya, Viśeṣa, Nirvāṇa. He calls Caryā, the life (உயிர்) of *Śuddha Śaiva.*[64] That would mean that without the practice of *Caryā, Śuddha Śaivam* would die; that is, no one not going through it would be entitled to be called a *Śuddha Śaiva.* He carries the metaphor further and says that the life within the life (of *Śuddha Śaivam*) is the *Gñāna Pūja,* that is, *Kriyā;* that the light (ஒளி) for the life is the great *Yōga Pūja,* and the external Kriyā consists in the creation of *Vāhanas* (vehicles) for the life of *Śuddha Śaivam* by erecting temples, etc.[65] It is seen from this (the poet elaborates it further later on) that *Caryā* is of four kinds :—*Caryā* in *Caryā, Kriyā* in *Caryā, Yōga* in *Caryā* and *Gñāna* in *Caryā.* The first consists in erecting temples, cleaning them, etc.; the second

[63] It is necessary to state here that one who does not read the first four sections referred to above with great care is likely to miss the points herein mentioned. It is the headings that are misleading. Under each of those sections something is said about the *Mārga Śaivas,* and the *Śuddha Śaivas,* and hence the real import of the stanzas must be perceived so as to verify the statements I have made. It is in stanza 1435 under the section *Mārga Śaivam* that we have the statement that the Śaivas who have not 'seen' *Vēdānta* are quite ordinary folk. This must be taken to refer to the *Aśuddha Śaivas;* for the other two (excluding *Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivas*) are described as having a knowledge of the *Vedānta.*

[64] St. 1443.

[65] St. 1444.

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is to perform *Pūja* (*Arcanas,* etc.); the third is to be lost to all the external world by contemplating upon the inward *Jyōtis* or light; and the fourth is to become the inward light itself (i.e., to become the 'life' of *Caryā* in the poet's language).[66] But this light is not the ultimate, and so by *Caryā* alone, the *Śuddha Śaiva* does not gain final release. Only *Sālōkya* is vouchsafed for him.[67] It is the *Gñāna* in *Caryā* that leads to *Sālōkya* (the world of Śivam), the *Gñāna* in *Kriyā* leads him on to *Sāmīpya* (Proximity), the *Gñāna* in *Yōga* confers upon him *Sārupya* (likeness in form) and the *Gñāna* in *Gñāna* leads him to *Sāyujya*[68] (Merging or Absorption).

In stanza 1447 Tirumūlar says "Nandi (Īśvara) made the four beginning with *Carya* and the *Gñāna* in each one of them, the six extended *Vēdāntas,* and the six *Siddhāntas,* for the benefit of ignorant folk".[69] The real meaning, as shown by the commentator, is that the four *Gñāna* parts of the four *Sādhanas* were made for the benefit of discerning people and the rest for the ignorant. As the commentator points out the six developments from the Vedas were the six *Darśanas, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yōga, Mīmāmsa* and *Vēdānta.* The six that came out of the *Āgamas* were

[66] St. 1444 & 1447.

[67] St. 1507.

[68] St. 1507.

[69] சரியாதி நான்குந் தருஞான நான்கும்
விரிவான வேதாந்த சித்தாந்த மாறும்
பொருளானது நந்தி பொன்னகர் போந்து
மருளாகு மாந்தர் வணங்கவைத்தானே.

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*Bhairavam, Vāmam, Kāḷamukham, Mahāvratam, Pāśupatam* and *Śaivam*. The inference to be made from Tirumūlar's stanza is that the *Vedānta Siddhānta,* or the *Śaiva Siddhānta* and its truths, are revealed to one who understands the grace of god, the *Gñāna* part of the *Gñāna Sādhana.*

Here, we see the manner in which Tirumūlar establishes the reconciliation between the Vēdas and the *Śaiva* Āgamas. One may conclude that this was done by him for the purpose of making clear to his contemporaries the true value of the Āgamas, and perhaps also of the Vēdas. Śankara had not yet come forward to establish the superiority of the *Advaita* doctrine, though some at least could not have been ignorant of it even before his time. Even during his days, he had to combat with the followers of the *Mīmāmsā, Sāṅkhya,* etc., as is amply seen from his commentary on the Brahma Sūtras. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that they existed a few centuries earlier also. Men like Tirumūlar would not be satisfied with the teachings of these systems, because, according to them, they were incomplete, and, as such, were not productive of much good. Vēdānta too was equally incomplete because it was, after all, theoretical, and needed for the realisation of its truths, a path like that advocated by Tirumūlar. Likewise, the six *Śaiva* sects enumerated above were presumably existing in the country from the earliest days. We see that the *Pāśupata Vrata* is greatly extolled in the Śiva Mahāpurāṇa. It states: "The great *Śaiva Dharma* is the greatest *anuṣṭhāna* (practice). It is spoken of in the Itihāsas and the

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Purāṇas. It is described in the *Aṅgas* and the *Upāṅgas* of *Śaiva Āgamas*. Its *Samskāras* (purificatory rites) and *Adhikāras* (qualifications) are well stated. The well-made *Śaiva Āgamas* themselves, are of two kinds; those based on the *Śrutis*, and those which are not. The former have their origin in the *Śrutis*; the latter have had an independent existence. The latter were originally ten in number. Later eighteen were added. Those named Kāmika, etc., are called *Siddhānta*. As for those which contain the essence of the *Śrutis*, they number a hundred crores. The Supreme *Pāśupata Vrata* is also called *Gñānam*. It is described by Śiva Himself, in the form of a Yōga Ācārya to disciples in the recurring *Yugas*. The teaching has been delivered in a condensed form to the four great Ṛṣis, Ruru, Dadhīci, Agastya, and Upamanyu. They have spread the knowledge of the *Pāśupata*. *Gurus* descended from them number in hundreds and thousands. The great *Dharma* stated therein is of four kinds, *Caryā*, etc. To those practising the *Pāśupata Yōga*, Śiva is certainly made manifest. Hence that *Anuṣṭhāna* which is most sacred is the *Pāśupata* religion.[70] The *Yōga* of eight names has been established by Śiva. Through that *Yōga* the knowledge of Śiva is born. Through this knowledge the Supreme Knowledge (Para Gñānam) is soon obtained. Śiva bestows His grace upon him in whom this knowledge is well-established. Through Grace the direct vision of Śiva is obtained. Through this direct perception of Śiva, he gets released from the root cause of *Samsāra*. When

[70] Śiva Purāṇa, Vāyu Samhita, Pūrvabhāga, Ch. 32, Sl. 17 & 18.

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later he becomes liberated from the cycle of birth and death, he becomes equal to Śiva (*Śiva-Sama*)."[71]

From the above extract, it is seen that *Pāśupata, Mahāvṛata* and *Śaiva* are all commonly alluded to under the name *Pāśupata Vratam.* It is also seen that this *anuṣṭhāna* is also called Siddhānta. But, if we are to accept the interpretation of Tirumūlar's commentator, these three had become differentiated into three branches of the *Siddhānta.* The three others were, *Bhairavam, Kāḷamukham* and *Vāmam.* Though we may infer that the Purāṇas, as they now exist, were grouped about the fourth century A. D., the subject-matter must have been very old. The great antiquity given (in the foregoing extract) to the *Pāśupata* justifies the conclusion that that form of religion was prevalent in the land for centuries. It was natural that in course of time, what started as a single religion got split up into different religions, each with its own votaries. Thus at the time that Tirumūlar wrote, there were six *Siddhāntas* relating to Śiva. The Purāṇa, it will be observed, has nothing but high praise to confer upon the Śaiva religion. It is also described as being essentially a religion of *Jñāna,* or knowledge, and not one of pure external rites and ceremonies.

But it is clear that, in course of time, the different branches of the Śaiva religion got into disrepute because a number of hypocrites began to lead a very bad life in the name of religion. They put on the garb of Śiva Bhaktas for selfish ends, and by the iniquity of their lives aroused social opprobrium. This is seen from the

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[71] *ibid.*, Ślokas 9—22.



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farce called *Mattavilāsa Prahasana* by the Pallava king Mahēndra Varman (A. D. 600—630). The play was evidently written for the purpose of casting ridicule upon such men. When we remember that it was this king who was converted by Appar from Jainism to Śaivism, his work becomes specially valuable. From the opening Śloka invoking the god Kàpāli (Śiva), it is seen that the king wrote the play only after becoming a Śaiva. It is a strong believer's expression of opinion upon one of the degenerate and disreputable forms of the creed. Evidently he saw before him many parading as *Pāśupatas* and *Kāpālis* (Kāpālikas) leading very vicious lives and he wrote this satire on them. The Kāpālika speaks in derision of other cults, howls out the sacred *Śiva Mantra, "Namaś-Śivāya"*, and goes immediately to the drink-shop in company with his prostitute. He says that the tavern resembles the *Yāgaśālā,* hall of sacrifice, and after prattling in this fashion, he misses his begging bowl. He thinks that it must have been either carried away by a dog (because of the smell of meat in it), or stolen by a '*Sākya Bhikṣu'*, or Buddhist monk. He then comes across the Buddhist monk; an altercation ensues, but no settlement is reached when a *Pāśupata* appears on the scene who is equally unable to end the dispute. Then an '*unmatta*' or a mad man comes with the bowl in his hand. He had recovered it from a dog which had carried it away. The mad-man seems to have delighted in eating the remnants of what was eaten by a dog:—"Kukkuṭa Khāditaśēṣam Māṁsa Khaṇḍam Svādiṣyāmi".[72] He too is a Śaiva

[72] Matt. p. 25.

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following one of the degenerate *Śaiva* paths, as is seen from his song identifying himself with Śiva:—"Gahīda śūla bahavēsa dhāḷiṇo śadam piśā ā udaḷē vahaṁti mē śadam ca vagghāṇa nisaggamīśānam muhēna muñcāmi aham mahōla ē".[73]

Thus we see the king is satirising the different ways in which *Śiva* sects degraded themselves. This process of degradation must have gone on for some centuries, and if Tirumūlar lived between the fourth and the sixth centuries A. D. he would have witnessed several similar absurdities. Perhaps, therefore, Tirumūlar desired to instruct people about the true *Śaiva* path or the *Sanmārga*. That was why he laid special emphasis upon *Jñāna* or wisdom among those practising the four *Sādhanas*: *Caryā, Kriyā, Yōga,* and *Jñāna.* In the *Tantra* we are now dealing with, he states definitely "there is no path in the country superior to that of *Jñāna;* there is no practice superior to it; the paths untouched by *Jñāna* will not yield *Mukti* (liberation); those who do not have *jñānam* are useless for the country".[74]

We have seen before that Tirumūlar divided *Caryā* into four paths so as to make it partake of the nature of *Kriyā, Yōga* and *Jñāna.* Similarly he divides the other three also. For example in Stanza 1474, he speaks of

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[73]Matt. p. 25.

[74]Stanza 1467.

ஞானத்தின் மிக்க வறநெறி நாட்டில்லை
ஞானத்தின் மிக்க சமபமு நன்றன்று
ஞானத்தின் மிக்கவை நன்முத்தி நல்சாவா
ஞானத்தின் மிக்கார் நகரின் மிக்காரே,

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the four sub-divisions of *Jñānam*. "The *kriyā* of *Jñāna* is the seeking of liberation, the *Yōga* of *Jñāna* is the shining light coming from *Nādānta*, and the *jñāna* of *Jñāna* is the state of denying 'I' and 'mine':[75] Likewise he applies the three *Dīkṣās* also to *Jñāna* (as he has done already for the other three). "The *Samaya Dīkṣa* of *Jñāna* is the seeing of oneself as the seeker; the *Viśēṣa Dīkṣa* of the same is the sought-for *Parōdayam* (or the dawning of supreme wisdom); its *Nirvāṇa Dīkṣā* is the grace of the Supreme Knower, and its *Abhiṣēka Dīkṣā* is the reaching of the supreme Guru's feet".[76]

After discussing these preliminaries of *Śaiva Śiddhānta* or *Sanmārga* as he calls it, Tirumūlar proceeds to describe the *Mārga* itself under the four headings of *Sanmārga, Sakhā Mārga, Satputra Mārga* and *Dāsa Mārga*. Of these, *Sanmārga*, is briefly defined in stanza 1477. It says "*Sanmārga* is (1) the sight of the brilliance described in the *Śrutis*, which takes the forms of the *Tatvas* of *Tat Śiva*";[77] (2) the becoming of a *Śiva Yōga Siddha* who rises above passion and wins a victory over Death;[78] Stanza 1479 says who obtain this. "*Sanmārga* will of itself give *Mukti*

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[75] ஞானத்தின் ஞானுதி நான்குமா ஞானிக்கு
ஞானத்தின் ஞானமே நானெனதென்னுமை
ஞானத்தில் யோகமே நாதாந்த நல்லொளி
ஞானச்கிரியையே நன்முத்தி நாடலே.

[76] Stanza 1476.

[77] சாற்றுஞ் சன்மார்க்க மாந்தற் சிவதத்துவத்
தோற்றங் களான சுருதிச் சுடர் கண்டு.

[78] சீற்ற மொழிந்து சிவயோக சித்தராய்க்
கூற்றத்தை வென்ருர் குறிப்பறிந்தார்களே.

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to those who see, worship and reflect upon, touch, praise and adorn their head with the feet of the Guru";[79] Later, he says that of these four, *Sanmārga* is the most praiseworthy. The other three are for the less advanced.[80] The same idea is more clearly expressed when he says that the other three come quite naturally to those who seek *Sanmārga*.[81]

After discussing in the succeeding three sections *Sakhā Mārga* (the path of being the friend of god), *Satputra Mārga* (that of becoming his son) and *Dāsa Mārga* (that of being his servant), the author describes the four realisations of *Sālōkya, Sāmīpya, Sārūpya* and *Sāyujya,* and then comes the account of the *Śakti Nipāta,* one of the essential tenets of *Śaiva Siddhānta,* '*Śakti Nipāta*' means 'the descent of *Śakti*' (or God's grace), and is divided by Tirumūlar into (1) *Manda,* (2) *Manda-tara,* (3) *Tīvra,* and (4) *Tīvra-tara.* These represent the different degrees of grace shown by God to *Śiva Bhaktas* according to their stage of development. Before closing the chapter, Tirumūlar takes occasion to expose the fallacy involved in the six 'external' religions. The chief reason why he condemns them is seen in stanza 1535 where he says that the followers of those paths do not attempt to get over

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79 தெரிசிக்கப் பூசிக்கச் சிந்தனை செய்யப்
பரிசிக்கக் கீர்த்திக்கப் பாதுகஞ்சூடக்
குருபத்தி செய்யுங் குவலயத் தோர்க்குத்
தருமுத்திச் சார்பூட்டுச் சன்மார்க்கந்தானே.

80 பின்மார்க்க சாதனம் பேதையர்க்காய் நிற்கும். St. 1483.

81 சன் மார்க்க மெய்தவரு மருஞ்சீடர்க்குப்
பின்மார்க்க மூன்றும் பெறவியல்பாம். St. 1484.

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their desires. "எம் (எமம்) உள்நின்று அழிய முயன்றிலர்". This shows that the one thing needed for the realisation of the ultimate truth was an effort to get over desires. In the poet's opinion, the rival systems do not pay heed to this practical side of *Bhakti*. As regards the *uṭcamayas* (or the inner paths of *Śaivism*), the poet is lenient. He states that all these lead to the same goal, and those who discriminate between them for the purpose of condemning those which they did not follow are like dogs barking at a hill.[82]

In thus speaking about the *Puṟaccamayas* external creeds) and the *Uṭcamayas* (the internal creeds), the poet has taken particular care not to name them. The learned commentator has named the former as *Bhairavam, Jainism, Pāñcarātram, Bhaṭṭācāryam, Lōkāyatam* and *Śūnyavādam*. It is clear that he has gone wrong in this particular, for Tirumūlar speaks of the followers of the six paths 'as those who seek God'.[83] We know that the *Lōkāyatas* were atheists and they could not have been meant. In the days of Śiva Jñāna Siddhiyār's *Supakṣam*, the ideas got somewhat changed as seen in some of the tenets of *Śaiva Siddhānta* contained therein; and so, we cannot be sure that the views of the Śaiva scholars of the later days about the six external and the six internal, *Samayas* can be accepted as applying to Tirumūlar's classification. Even if we do

82 ஒன்றது பேரூர் வழி யாறதற்குள்
வென்றது போல விருமுச்சமயமு
நன்றிது தீதிதுவென் றுரையாளர்கள்
குன்றுகுரைத்தெழு நாயையொத்தார்களே. St. 1558.

83 " அண்ணலை நாடிய ஆறுசமயமும் " St. 1535.

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that, we find a difference between the list given by Mr. Tiruviḷangam Pillai in his commentary on Śivajñāna Siddhiyār on page 3 of his book and the list supplied in Mr. Viśvanātha Piḷḷai's commentary on *Tirumandiram,* cited above. Very possibly Tirumūlar did not think of separate sects when he was speaking of the external and internal *Samayas.* He was, I believe, referring to one and the same set of six which he refers to in stanza 1449 as the six *Siddhāntas,* along with the six *Vedāntas.* The six *Siddhāntas,* or the six Śaiva systems, which arose from the *Śaiva Āgamas,* became *Samayas* because they required the *Dīkṣā* or the ceremony of initiation for people to accept them as religious paths. We have seen how Tirumūlar has used the word *Samaya* in the sense of ordinary *Dīkṣā.* Therefore when Tirumūlar speaks of people following the external and internal *Samayas,* he refers to people who make much of the external as opposed to internal *Dīkśās* or purifications. According to him, all those who pinned their faith upon mere external initiation or purification were to be classed as people who could not have final liberation or *mukti,* and all who went through inward purification were entitled to reach the highest. To him, it did not matter whether one was a *Pāśupata* or a *Bhairava* or a *Kāḷamukha* in external form. If that person gained knowledge through inward cleansing, he was on the right path. That is why he says "All the six *Samayas* lead to the same goal"[84] and that it is delusion that makes people speak of the

[84] ஆன சமயமது விதநன்றெனு
மாய மனிதர் மயக்கம். St. 1545.

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*Samaya* as this or that. He urges that the "god transcending the songs (*Vedas* or *Stōtras*) should be searched for and He alone is the faultless form."[85] The explanation given above about the identity of the six *samayas* (except in the manner in which they were viewed) is well brought out in stanza 1537 where the poet says "In truth, there are a hundred *Samayas;* the six *Samayas* are also similarly paths (for realisation). The higher path which does not stop with these accepted *Samayas* is the path leading to *Mokṣa*".[86] Here, we must notice that he speaks only of six actually prevalent *Samayas* which are both external and internal *Samayas*.

### vii. *Tirumūlar's exposition of Śiva-Bhakti.*

From the foregoing account of the fifth *Tantra,* it will be seen that Tirumūlar rendered into Tamil (for the first time) the cardinal principles of *Śaiva Siddhānta* which were expounded later on to Aruḷ Nandi and others in the light of some verses taken from the *Rauravа Āgama.* The sixth *Tantra* is essentially an illuminating book on the *Śiva-Bhakti* path in general. If we read it, we cannot but feel convinced that the essence of the teaching contained therein got finally rooted in the minds of the *Śiva-Bhaktas* who lived after Tirumūlar, particularly of such advanced souls as the

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85 கானங் கடந்த கடவுளை நாடுமி
னூனங் கடந்த வுருவது வாமே.

86 நூறு சமயமுளவா நுவலுங்கா
லாறு சமய மவ்வாறுட் படுவன
கூறு சமயங்கள் கொண்ட நெறிநில்லா
வீறு பரநெறி யில்லாநெறியன்றே. St. 1537.

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*Tēvāram* hymners. For that reason the teaching has to be examined at least superficially. The first section on *Śiva Guru Darśana* begins with a categorical statement that God alone is the *Guru* who shows Śiva; the reason alleged is that He shows *Sat* (*Śivam*), *Asat* (*Bondage*) and *Sat-Asat* (*Ātma*);[87] The next stanza identifies *Sat-guru* with *Ambalam* or *Cidākāśa Śiva.* The object here is to make the reader understand that the *Guru* is to be sought for, not externally, but inside one's own heart. Then it is stated that through the grace of Śiva as *'Nādan'*, the eight Siddhis, the purification (which makes the soul *Śiva*), the purity effected by the eight powers (*Śakti*), the *Yogic* powers, the realisation of the *mantras*, knowledge and *Bhakti* are obtained.[88] It is necessary here to note that the poet speaks of different kinds of powers, e.g., the eight *Siddhis* of the first line are mentioned as being distinct from the '*Yōgic* powers'. Thus it is clear that the poet did not think of the *Yōgis* who had the eight powers of *Aṇimā*, etc., as *Siddhas*. That was why he did not remain satisfied with the teachings of the *Yōga*. He wanted to transcend those stages attainable by *Yōga*, and attain higher powers which he later on describes (though not very intelligibly) in the 8th *Tantra*. The grace spoken

87 பத்தி பணித்துப் பரவுமடி நல்கிச்
சுத்த வுரையாற்றுரி சறச் சோதித்துச்
சத்து மசத்துஞ் சத்தசத்துங் காட்டலாற்
சித்த மிறையே சிவகுருவாமே. St. 1573.

88 சித்தி களெட்டொடுந்திண் சிவமாக்கிய
சுத்தியு மெண் சத்தித்தூய்மையும் யோகத்துச்
சத்தியு மந்திர சாதக போதமும்
பத்தியு நாதனருளிற் பயிலுமே,



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of before is (in the next stanza) said to descend upon good men's minds.

In that state, the *Guru* is called *Śuddha Śiva* or Pure Śiva who helps the man aspiring for final release from his *Pāśa* or bondage. When *Śivam* becomes *Guru Param,* His function is to reveal by *Upadēśa* the *Śiva Guru* (of Stanza 1573) and the *Śuddha Guru* (of stanza 1575), within the three-fold *Pati-Paśu-Pāśam,* and to remove the *Paśu's Pāśa* by instructing it in the paths leading to *Mukti.*

From these stanzas, it is found that the person aspiring for final release from his *Pāśa* or bondage has to pass through several stages. First of all, he gets help from *Guru Param* who instructs him in the path leading to *Mukti* (முத்திப்பால்). Then, *Śuddha Guru* appears to confer upon him Divine Grace. When he receives this Grace he obtains several powers, namely, the ability to comprehend the *Mantras,* the *Yōgic* powers, the purity conferred by the eight *Śaktis,* and the eight higher *Siddhis.* In the next stage the *Sat-guru* reveals himself in the *Cid-Ākāśa* and breaks all the three bonds (*Āṇava, Karma* and *Māyā*), and leads the aspirant to the land of *Mukti.* Later still, Śiva-Guru presents himself and manifests *Sat, Asat* and *Sat-Asat.* When the individual soul gets finally established in this knowledge, it becomes *Śivam.* Thus, the first thing needed is to see the *Guru Param.* But Tirumūlar takes care to state once again that the *Guru* to be seen (in the earlier or in the later stage) was none other than *Śiva* Himself. "Nandi said:—*Guru* is *Śiva*

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Himself. People do not remember that *Guru* is *Śiva.* The *Guru* will remain as *Śiva,* and as the leader. The *Guru* alone is the leader transcending the *Vēda* and *Āgama, Pramāṇas*".[89] The influence of this teaching will be seen later on, when we examine the *Tēvāram* hymns where God is called by the name of *Guru.*[90]

Having spoken of the manifestations of Śiva as *Guru,* Tirumūlar devotes the 2nd section to praise the 'holy feet', which means only the grace conferred by God. This grace is received by the *Bhakta* when he meditates upon the god locating Him in the heart, in the junction of the eyes and nose, and in the head (i.e., in the lotuses called respectively *Anāhata, Ājña* and *Sahasrāra*). It is this that is stated in stanza 1596;[91] "It will be impossible to explain how Nandi placed his feet on my heart, my eyes and my head, and showed me *mokṣa,* truth and the teachings of the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*". Finally there is the glorification of the 'feet' (grace) in stanza 1604 where the poet says "The holy feet of my lord are *Mantra,* medicine, *Tantra, Dānas* (gifts), beauty and truth".[92]

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[89] St. 1581.

[90] ஒருவராயிரு மூவருமாயவன் குருவதாய குழகன்.
Appar—Tirukkaḍambūr Tirumuṛai 5.

[91] இதயத்து நாட்டத்து மென்றன் சிரத்தும்
பதிவித்த பாதம் பராபர நந்தி
கதிவைத்த வாறு மெய்காட்டிய வாறும்
விதிவைத்த வாறும் விளம்ப வொண்ணாதே.

[92] மந்திரமாவதும் மாமருந்தாவதுந்
தந்திரமாவதுந் தானங்களாவதும்
சுந்தரமாவதுந் தூய்நெறியாவதும்
எந்தைபிரான்றன் இணையடிதானே,

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This teaching also has like the previous one affected the thoughts of the *Tēvāram* hymners; for we have several songs in praise of the holy feet, e.g., the last line of each stanza in Appar's Tirukkaḍavūr Mayāna Padigam 5*th Tirumuṟai,* each verse of which ends with 'Perumān Aḍigaḷē'.

In the next section, Tirumūlar discusses the group *Gñātṛ-Gñāna -Gñeyam* or the knower, the known and knowledge. One stanza in this section contains the entire teaching in a nutshell. It runs thus :—" Those who reach *Gñēya* will obtain *Gñāna,* etc.; the *Gñātṛ* of *Gñēya* is the *Mōkṣa* in *Gñēya;* those who gain *Gñēya* in *Gñēya* will gain the true knowledge resulting from the combination of both."[93] The explanation of the above stanza is as follows:—Those who stand rooted in *Śiva Ānanda* will gain knowledge and *Mukti.* The *Ātma* who knows *Śiva Ānanda* finds release in it, and makes it his permanent abode. In *Śiva Ānanda,* people gain *Śiva* and *Śakti.* Such people obtain the true knowledge which is only a union of *Śiva* and *Śakti.* This explanation is based upon the commentary of this stanza by Mr. Viśvanātha Piḷḷai. The author intends to teach through this stanza that *Gñēya* is *Śiva Ānanda* which itself is a product of *Śiva* and His Grace, *Śakti.* The *Gñātṛ* is the individual soul dwelling in that *Ānanda,* and by doing so knows it (or obtains *Gñānam*). Thus, actually there are only two, the

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93 ஞேயத்தே நின்றோர்க்கு ஞானாதி நின்றிடும்
ஞேயத்தின் ஞாதுரு ஞேயத்தில் வீடாகும்
ஞேயத்தின் ஞேபத்தை ஞேயத்தை யுற்றவர்
ஆயத்தினின்ற வரறிவறி வாரே.

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knower and the knowledge-to-be-known; in other words, the *Jīva Ātma* and the *Paramātma.* The latter is separated from the former when conceived of as *Gñēyam,* or something to be known. These two are mentioned in the next stanza as he 'தான்' and He 'அவன்'; '*he*' is *Jīva Ātma,* and '*He*' is *Paramātma.* But in reality both are one. This is explained in the next stanza. The poet says "The tatva is two-fold, being known as '*he*' and '*He*'. If both are seen in oneself, and the '*he*' is joined to '*He*' as a flower is placed at the feet of the Lord, then the '*I*' or '*he*' and the '*He*' will become one".[93a] The point urged here is that as long as the individual *Ātma* is conscious of the difference, there will be *Dvaitam* or the 'Two-ness'; but when the individual *Ātma* is merged in the universal *Ātman* the 'two-ness' disappears as a flower becomes a part of the image on which it is placed, and only 'one-ness' remains. Here we have the teaching of '*Advaitam*' which is at the root of the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* doctrine of *Śaiva Siddhānta,* and hence it is that it is spoken of *Śiva Advaitam.* It is this teaching that finds expression in Appar's song in the 5th Tirumuṟai,[94] i.e., "He stood as one in all these worlds. He cannot be known by those who stood as two (i.e., who stood separate from 'Him')".

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93a தானென் றவனென்றிரண் டாகுந் தத்துவந்
தானென் றவனென்றிரண்டுந் தனிற்கண்டு
தானென்ற பூவை யவனடி சாத்தினா
னானென் றவனென் கை நல்லதொன் றன்றே.

94 ஒருவனாகி நின்றானிவ் வுலகெலாம்
இருவராகி நின்றார் க்ட்கறிகிலான்.

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Tirumūlar then passes on to speak of what he calls '*Tuṟavu*' which is seen to be nothing more than 'detachment' or, as the Gītā puts it '*Karma-phala-tyāga*'. Here again the central idea is briefly expressed in one stanza. It says "The God of brilliance (சோதிப்பிரான்) who is seen by those who practise the penance of detachment after avoiding birth and death and the two worlds, is He who shows the *Mukti* path to those who, without forgetfulness, praise Him always".[95] From this it is seen that Tirumūlar's meaning is that those who praise the Lord and perform *Pūjā*, etc., to Him are shown the path which leads on to *Mukti;* whereas, those who get over their desires and give up the fruits of those desires, i.e., birth in this world as also in the other world of *Svarga,* become qualified through their penance and detachment to see the Lord as the Supreme Brilliance. Stanza 1616 describes Śiva Himself as the *Sanyāsi,* who is without birth, without friends and relations, who dwells in the forest and eats *Bhikṣā* offerings. He is spoken of as the 'mad man' who cuts away the cycle of births to liberate those who have abandoned their desires. There is also a suggestion in this stanza that Śiva took this form for the purpose of instructing people as to how they were to be *Sanyāsis.*

This teaching is imbibed by the *Tēvāram* hymners like the rest. We find Appar saying "I did not follow the *Sanyāsi's* pure path".[96]

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[95] St. 1614.

[96] துறந்தார் தந்அ நெறிக்கட் சென் றேனல்லேன்.
Appar—6th Tirumuṟai. Tiruvāḍuturai Padigam 10.

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Naturally this section leads on to the next one on penance itself. The nature of the penance as explained by Tirumūlar is revealed to be merely the fortitude needed to resist the attraction of perishable pleasures. "Those who seat themselves with the determination to go through severe penance will not be tempted by Indra or any one else, but will finally fix their thoughts on *Śivam*".[97] The story of Indra and others disturbing men who devote themselves to penance is very frequently mentioned in the Purāṇas. Dhruva and Viśvāmitra had to undergo such troubles. The implication is that, when rigorous penance is resorted to, several powers are gained, and Indra and other *Dēvas* become afraid that their position would be endangered thereby. Therefore, they cause obstacles by offering several celestial pleasures. But the *Yōgi* does not care for these, and will feel satisfied only with the supreme bliss that can be gained through union with *Śivam*. So Tirumūlar gives the following advice:—"Cast off the pride resulting from the ability to recite the *Śāstras*. Look inside yourselves for a minute. This inward look will keep you as firmly rooted in truth as the nail driven in the green tree. The birth you have got (the bondage in the body) will fly away from you". We can notice similar advice given by the *Tēvāram* hymners. There

[97] St. 1627.

இருந்து வருந்தி யெழிற்றவஞ்செய்யும்
பெருந்தன்மையாளரைப் பேதிக்கவென்றே
யிருந்திந் திரனே யெவரேவரினும்
திருந்துந் தன் சிந்தை சிவனவன் பாலே.

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is even verbal similarity between this stanza of Tirumūlar[98] and one of Appar.[99]

Then we notice that he has nothing but high praise to bestow upon the Tamil land, which according to him is the land of knowledge. He says that wise men wander about here and there with their minds fully developed and singing songs as easily as they would spit out water. To whom does he allude when he speaks about the scattering of wisdom in this fashion? It is certain that he was referring to men who had already produced a literature full of religious and philosophic truths. Since we know that the *Tēvāram* hymners lived only after him, he must certainly have referred to only such works as the *Paripāḍal*, *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, *Nāladiyar*, the songs of Avvai, Nakkīrar and others. We can well imagine that the sacred *Kuṟaḷ* had sunk deep in the minds even of the ordinary folk, and because of its exceedingly popular nature, the couplets must have been on the lips of the common people. The Tamils have, for ages, been soaked in that literature, and even to-day we can see that quite ordinary people without any pretensions to high culture or scholarship quote (often

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98 சாத்திரமோதுஞ் சதுர்களை விட்டுநீர்
மாத்திரைப்போது மனத்துள்ளே நோக்குமின்
பார்த்த விப்பார்வை பசுமரத்தாணிபோ
லார்த்தபிறவி யகல விட்டோடுமே—Tirumūlar, St. 1631.

99 சாத்திரம் பலபேசும் சழக்கர்காள்
கோத்திரமுங் குலமுங் கொண்டென்செய்வீர்
பாத்திரஞ் சிவமென்று பணிதிரேல்
மாத்திரைக்குள ருளுமாற் பேறரே.
Appar:—5th Tirumuṟai-Tirumāṟpēṟu, St. 3,

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unconsciously) from the *Kuṟaḷ*. The well-known couplet extolling the virtues of *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and *Nālaḍiyār* is known to every Tamil speaking person:—

நாலுமிரண்டும் சொல்லுக்குறுதி ஆலும்வேலும் பல்லுக்குறுதி

i.e., "The four and the two give strength to speech as the banyan twig and the *vēl* twig strengthen the teeth". Here, the 'four' and the 'two' refer to *Nālaḍiyār* and *Kuṟaḷ* respectively. The *Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai* sung by Nakkīrar forms now part of the 11th Tirumuṟai (sacred texts) of the Śaivas, and is highly valued. Every one who desires to become a Tamil poet gets it by heart and reverently repeats it every day. There is not the least doubt that it was written by the Nakkīrar of the Śangam age. (I shall revert to it later). The *Paripāḍal* contains among other matters, praises of Viṣṇu and Subrahmaṇya. Both are pregnant with the teachings of the Purāṇas and evidence a thorough assimilation of Sanskrit and Tamil culture.[100]

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[100] *Note.*—It is not quite proper, in this place, to demonstrate by means of tedious argument that the late scholar Swāmikaṇṇu Pillai was wrong in fixing the date of the *Paripāḍal* as the seventh century A.D. But it may be briefly mentioned that he bases his astronomical arguments on the description of the planetary positions as found in Poem 11 of *Paripāḍal*. Dr. Swāmikaṇṇu Piḷḷai also recognises the fact that the poet is endeavouring to place all the planets in their respective houses; but since the planetary combination mentioned in the text becomes impossible because Mercury is placed in Mithuna instead of Kanni, Dr. Swāmikaṇṇu Piḷḷai makes his own corrections which ultimately result in placing the Sun in Mithuna, which is not the Sun's house, and dating the event as Friday the 17th June, 634 A.D. It can be very easily seen that if the real correction is made by altering the text in the sixth line by substituting 'Kanni' for 'Mithuna', the result would be that the object of the poet would be gained by giving all the planets their own respective houses (except of course the moon which could not in either case be in Kaṭaka) and the very correct date of the flood, 17 A.D. (suggested by Dr. Swāmikaṇṇu Piḷḷai himself) would become acceptable.



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Besides these great pieces of literature, the value of the *Śilappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai* could not have been ignored by Tirumūlar. We can also infer that at the time Tirumūlar was writing, the text of the Tamil Mahābhārata sung by Bāratam-pāḍiya Perundēvanār must have been available, and so it was not without any justification that Tirumūlar bestowed so much praise upon the Tamils. It is doubtful if any other peoples such as the Telugus, the Maharāṣṭras, or the Karṇāṭakas, or the Tuḷus could have had, at that remote age, a literature as rich in high philosophical thought as that of the Tamils.

Passing on now to the other matters discussed in the 6th *Tantra* of the *Tirumandiram*, we notice that the poet deals with the external appearance of (1) men of vanity, (2) men of penance, (3) men of wisdom, and (4) men of devotion to Śiva. We need not enter into details but we may notice that not one word is found which would apply to *Śākya Bhikṣus* and Jains. This is a point of some importance, since we notice the contrast in this particular between the writings of the *Tēvāram* hymners and that of Tirumūlar. The former do not lose any opportunity to speak ill of the Jains, and at least one word of abuse is found in every one of Appar's and Sambandar's *Padigams*. This clearly shows that the Jains had not become as obnoxious in the days of Tirumūlar as they were in the later period. We can therefore argue that Tirumūlar must have lived at least a century, or a century and a half, earlier than Appar,

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We cannot be far wrong therefore if we state that Tirumūlar lived in the fifth century A.D.

viii. *The Central Teaching of the Tirumandiram.*

It is when we pass on to the later *Tantras* that we get at the central teaching of Tirumūlar. In the 7th *Tantra*, we notice that it deals with a variety of topics that do not at first sight have any relation with one another. But when closely examined, one perceives that it deals with what will be revealed to the *Yōgi* who follows the *Sakhā Mārga* noticed in the fifth *Tantra*. The first section gives a general description of the six *Ādhāras* or 'Supports'. They are the six *cakras;—Mūlādhara, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipūraka, Anāhata, Viśuddhi, Ājña.* The poet says that by the purification of the *Ādhāras,* the *Nāḍis* get purified.[101] Along with the *Ādhāras,* the poet also speaks in the same section of the *nāda, bindu,* etc. and also of other purifications. In the next five sections, five different *Liṅgas* are described, and we have to infer that by the necessary purifications, the *Sakhā Mārgin* perceives them one after another. The *Liṅga* here merely means the sign or the mark by which the reality can be perceived or grasped. First of all comes the *Aṇḍa liṅga* or the form by which the *Aṇḍa* or the universe can be recognised. In the opening stanza the poet says, "None knows the *Liṅga.* The *Liṅga* becomes the eight directions. It becomes the six *Kalās* (sciences). It became the earth".[102] As the commentator points out, the meaning

[101] St 1707.
[102] St. 1712.

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of this stanza is that the whole universe is to be understood to be the form of the *Śiva-Liṅga,* or the true form by which the unknowable *Śivam* is to be recognised. The rest of the section deals with the same subject more exhaustively identifying every moving and immovable thing with *Śiva-Liṅga.* Read in the light of the stanzas dealing with the various *Śiva-gurus* described in the first section of the 6th *Tantra,* we have room to infer that the *Para-guru* mentioned in stanza 1577 points out to the disciple this *Aṇḍa-Liṅga* first to teach him the way of liberation. The unillumined disciple usually thinks of objects in the universe as things apart from God, and so he has to be told that the universe is but the mark through which God is to be seen, for God's *liṅga* is the universe. When he sees it, he reflects upon the underlying unity in the apparent multiplicity of creation and seeks further knowledge of the same.

In this connection, it is worth while remembering Upamanyu's remark in the Mahābhārata (alluded to above) that all beings in the universe, moveable and immoveable, are marked by Mahādēva's *liṅgam.* There he is referring to the *Aṇḍa Liṅga* mentioned by Tirumūlar.

When the spiritual disciple has had a good conception of the *Aṇḍa Liṅga,* he becomes fit enough to receive the further instruction that the *Aṇḍa,* or the Universe, is reflected or even contained in the *Piṇḍa,* i.e., the body. Hence, the poet passes on to describe the *Piṇḍa Liṅga.* He says 'The form of the human body is *Śiva Liṅga'.*[103] This instruction is given apparently by the same *Guru,*

[103] St. 1726.

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called *Guruparam* above. This teaching enables one to perceive the identity between oneself and the external universe, and the aspirant is no longer deluded in the belief that he must search for his god outside himself. The god, it is here indicated, is to be looked for inside oneself. That in reality is the special province of the *Yōgi* following the *Sakhā Mārga* as opposed to the work of the one who practises worship through *Caryā* and *Kriyā,* and because he now begins to regard God as staying always within himself like a constant companion, the term *Sakhyam,* or companionship, is quite appropriate in describing his relation to God. Having advanced so far, he begins to perceive God within himself in God's perceivable form, as *Sadā-Śiva.* Hence, the poet next mentions *Sadāśiva Liṅgam,* or, the characteristic or form of Sadāśiva. He sees Him as having two feet, ten hands, five faces, and fifteen eyes:[104] The esoteric meaning of the two feet, etc., will be known only to those who follow the path shown by Tirumūlar and others. They are not to be taken to be physical forms, as Tirumūlar himself states:—"*Sadāśiva* is formless".[105] This knowledge about *Sadāśiva* is apparently given by the *guru* called *Sadāśiva guru.*[106] Having had a realisation of *Śadāśiva,* the Sakhā Māргin passes on to the stage when he gains a knowledge of the *Ātman.* Hence it is that Tirumūlar

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[104] கூடிய பாதமிரண்டும் படிமிசை
பாடிய கையிரண்டெட்டும் பரந்தெழுந்
தேடுமுக மைந்து செங்கையின்மூவைந்து
நாடுஞ் சதாசிவ நல்லொளி முத்தே. St. 1730.

[105] St. 1737.

[106] St. 1576.

deals next with the *Ātma-Liṅga*. But the author becomes particularly abstruse in his teaching because he is dealing with the fairly unintelligible. The *Ātma* is the reflection of *Cit* in *Sat-cit-Ānanda* (as *Sadāśivam* may be taken to be a reflection of the *Ānanda* in it). It is this that is referred to in the first *sūtra* of Śiva Sūtra Vimarśini. "Caitanyam Ātmā". Tirumūlar explains the *Ātma-Liṅgam* symbolically[107] by saying that "The (Sound) *'A'* will stand as the first and as the all. *'U'* will first manifest itself in the *Jīva* (உயிர்); if both *'A'* and *'U'* are to be known, both are the *Liṅga* (i.e., *Ātma-Liṅga*)". It is certain that Tirumūlar does not refer to the sounded or unsounded sound *'A'* or *'U'* in stating this. These are conventional expressions, the real import of which is grasped by the initiated *Yōgi*. The rest of the section is an exposition of the *Bindu, Nāda,* etc., helpful for the realisation of the *Ātma Liṅga*. The *guru* who instructs the disciple in this *Ātmagñānam* is the '*Nāda-Guru*' mentioned in stanza 1575. After one gets well established in this knowledge, one gains complete knowledge, and he sees the '*Gñāna-Liṅgam*' dealt with by Tirumūlar in the next section. This knowledge may be called in the language of the *Gītā, Adhyātma Gñānam*. It is an understanding of the '*Svabhāva*' or the 'nature' of *Śaivam* (or *Brahmam*). The central idea of Tirumūlar is hinted in stanza 1768 where he says "The pure *Jyōtis* (தூவொளி) which is beyond *Śakti*, and in the heart of *Parā Śakti*, which is the abode of that which is indicated by the Lord *Śuddha Śivam*', which

[107]St. 1753.

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is beyond the 'beyond' of His grace, and is equal to (or may be stated to be more or less the same as) the Truth which Īśa becomes".[108] The meaning may be rendered clearer by translating these ideas in the terms of *Sat, Cit,* and *Ānanda.* The *Śuddha Śiva* is *Sat.* Ānanda is the stage reached by one who has had Divine grace. So the poet says that *Śuddha Śivapada,* or *Sat,* is beyond (*cit*), the beyond of (*Ānanda*) His Grace. That *Śuddha Śiva pada* is *Gñānam.* It is this that is instructed by the *guru* called *Sat-guru* in stanza 1574. When the spiritual student gains this highest knowledge enabling him to understand *Śuddha Śiva* or *Sat* by his characteristic of Gñāna (hence the term *Gñāna-Liṅga*), he rises higher and dwells in the *Sat* itself. The only mark of *Sat* that he distinguishes is *Śiva-Liṅgam.* He has now transcended Gñāna also. Thus it is that Tirumūlar devotes the next section to *Śiva-Liṅga.* There the *Sakhā Mārgin* sees himself as one with *Śivam.*[109]

The foregoing is the central teaching of the Tirumandiram, and it is interesting to notice that it bears a close resemblance to the teaching contained in the four *Mahāvākyas,* which are believed to be the essence of the teachings of the Upaniṣads. When the *Paraguru* instructs the disciple that the *Śiva* in the *Aṇḍa,* or the

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108 சத்திக்குமேலே பராசத்தி தன்னுள்ளே
சுத்தசிவ பதந்தோயாத தூவொளி
யத்தன்றிருவடிக்கப்பாலைக் கப்பாலா
மொத்தவுமா மீசன்றானான் வுண்மையே. St. 1768.

109 ஒன்றெனக் கண்டே எம்மீசனொருவனை.

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universe, is the same as the Śiva in himself, we are at once reminded of the expression *Tat Tvam Asi,* i.e., 'That art thou' (the 9th to the 16th Khaṇḍas of the 6th Prapāṭhaka of the Chāndōgya upaniṣad are worth comparison in this respect). The next stage when he sees the *Sadāśiva-Liṅga,* and receives Divine grace corresponds to the truth in the *Mahāvākya, 'Aham Brahmāsmi'.* The stage at which the *Ātma-Liṅgam* is seen, and the student rests in pure *Cit,* has its parallel in the realisation of *Brahmaivāham.* The next one where the *Gñāna-Liṅga* is seen is the same as the stage indicated by *Pragñānam Brahma.* The still later one in which the *Śiva Liṅga* is seen is the final union of the *Jīvātma* and the *Paramātma* which is beyond *'Pragñānam Brahma'* but about which there is no *Mahāvākyam,* because there is neither master nor disciple there.

The two sections dealing respectively with *Tiruvaruḷ vaippu,* and *Aruḷ oḷi* are mere elaborations of the experience of Divine grace. Then follow a few sections relating to *Śiva-Pūjā, Guru-Pūjā* and *Māhēśvara-Pūjā.* The last is somewhat important in enabling us to form an opinion of what Tirumūlar thought about the feeding of real *Śiva Bhaktas.* What he means by *Māhēśvara-Pūja* is merely the feeding of Śaiva devotees. The poet bestows high praise on such acts of charity. He says "What does it matter if a thousand villages are given to Brāhmans? What does it matter if a thousand towers (of temples) are constructed? These do not bear the fruit borne by the gift of a mid-day meal to a

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Gñāni".[110] This stanza is valuable in its own way. It shows that in his time, there was the practice of making large gifts of villages to Brahmans, as well as the practice of building temples. As for the former, we know that it was a very old custom. The Vēḷvikkuḍi grant makes mention of the fact that Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Pāṇḍya had given a village in this manner, and that the Kaḷabhra conquest of the country was responsible for the loss of the Brahman's right over the land.[111] As for the building of the temples, we know of one king who did it, i.e., Kō-ccengaṇ. Perhaps there were others too. In any case, Tirumūlar must have lived at a time when the monarchs could have afforded the luxury of building temples. In other words, he must have been nearer the fourth century in point of time than the sixth century. Again, there is another stanza which says "One handful of food given to the ashes-wearing *Śiva-Bhaktas* gives more fruit than the food given to a crore of sacrificing Brahmans".[112] While this evidences the wide popularity of the sacrificial ritual, it also shows how a few like Tirumūlar were averse to it.

In the succeeding sections, Tirumūlar speaks about the sanctity of *Aḍiyār*, and states for the benefit of the

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110 அகரமா யிரமந்தணர்க் கீயிலென்
சிகரமாயிரஞ் செய்து முடிக்கிலென்
பகருஞானி பகலூண் பலத்துக்கு
நிகரிலை யென்பது நிச்சயந்தானே.

111 Epi. Rep. 1908. p. 66.

112 St. 1861.



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*Śaiva* mendicants, the manner in which they were to obtain alms and eat. One section deals with the *Mudras,* or special *Yōgic* contrivances they were to practise. A few sections deal with minor matters, including the manner in which saints were to be buried. Then there follows an account of what is called *Āditya Nilai,* or the position of the sun. In this are given some details of *Aṇḍa-Āditya, Piṇḍa-Āditya, Mana-Āditya, Gñāna-Āditya* and *Śiva-Āditya.* It is seen from stanza 1996 that the word *Āditya* is used in the sense of the "dispeller of the darkness of ignorance, which is the cause of birth". He says, "The moon, fire and the sun remove physical darkness. The merciful Nandi, on the other hand, removes birth-producing darkness". Thus it is seen that these descriptions are like the description of the *liṅgas* intended to help the *Yōgi,* endeavouring to conceive of God as the remover of the cause of birth. The remaining sections need not be taken up for examination, though in themselves they are valuable.

Similarly, we may leave off the teaching contained in the 8th *Tantra* as being highly technical and purely philosophical in character. But two stanzas are worth notice, as showing what Tirumūlar's opinion was about *Vedānta, Siddhānta,* etc. One says:—"*Paśu,* which is the '*Tvam*' *pada* of the *Vēdānta* is said to be the *Pati* when it casts off the *Pāśa* (bondage) which lies beyond *Nādāntam.* The '*Tat*' *pada* which is the *final* knowledge of *Bōdhāntam* uniting with the *Pati* (mentioned

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above) is *Śiva-Sāyujya*".[113] The other says "Becoming Śiva is *Vēdānta-Siddhānta*. The remaining four are vain (teachings). If *Sadāśiva* that becomes *Śiva* reaches one-ness, the wonderful Vēdānta knowledge becomes *Siddhāntam*";[114] The other four *Antās*, or teachings, are found to be *Nādāntam Bōdhāntam*, *Yōgāntam* and *Kālāntam*.[115] Thus it is seen that these were six fundamental systems prevalent during the time of Tirumūlar, and that according to him the really valuable system was *Vēdānta Siddhānta*.

That is the reason why Tāyumānavar sings highly in praise of the saints who have understood the essence of *Vēdānta* and *Siddhānta*:

வேதாந்த சித்தாந்த சமரச நன்னிலைபெற்ற வித்தகச் சித்தர் கணமே

and it must be noticed that Tāyumānavar speaks of his *Mauna-Guru* as one who was descended from Tirumūlar:—

" மந்த்ரகுருவே யோக தந்த்ரகுருவே மூலன் மரபில் வரு மௌன குருவே "

The later portions of the Tirumandiram deal with the realisations possible for those who follow this great path of *Vēdānta-Siddhānta*. The

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113 வேதாந்த தொம்பத மேவும் பசுவென்ப
நாதாந்த பாசம் விடநின்ற நன்பதி
போதாந்த தற்பதம் போயிரண்டயிக்கியஞ்
சாதாரணஞ் சிவசாயுச்சியமாமே. St. 2392.

114 சிவமாதல் வேதாந்த சித்தாந்தமாகு
மவமாகும் அவ்வவ் விரண்டுஞ்
சிவமாஞ் சதாசிவன் செய்தொன்றுஞ
னவமான வேதாந்த ஞானசித்தாந்தமே. St. 2392.

115 St. 2386, 2387.

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student of South Indian Śaiva philosophy has ample material in them for investigation; but since we are, here, concerned only with the history of the Śaiva religion, we need not take it up for enquiry. We may pass on to see how the country was influenced by the songs of the *Tēvāram* hymners; but to understand that, we shall have to know the nature of the songs themselves. We shall take them in the order in which they are placed in the *Śaiva Tirumuṟai.*

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# CHAPTER X

## SAMBANDAR.

### i. *The Jaina prominence at the close of the sixth century A.D.*

The first feature that strikes one who reads the Tēvārams of Sambandar is that, in every one of his *padigams,* he makes it a point to condemn the Jains. The same tendency is to be noticed in Appar, though not to such an extent. We do not find any such attitude taken up either by Tirumūlar or Sundaramūrti. The obvious inference is that Appar and Sambandar lived at a time when the Jains were powerful enough to cause trouble to the Śaivas. They were not perhaps occupying any prominent position during the days of Tirumūlar. Their power had gone during the time of Sundarar. In the previous chapters, we have seen that Tirumūlar lived between the fourth and the sixth centuries, very probably in the first half of the fifth century. From the contemporaneity between Mahēndravarma and Appar, it has been rightly argued that Appar and Sambandar lived in the first half of the seventh century A. D. Thus, it may be taken for granted that the sixth century was the period of Jaina prominence in the land. The question naturally arises as to what could have been the contributory causes for this Jaina upheaval.

From the *Śilappadikāram,* it is clear that the relations between the Hindus and the Jains were quite cordial, though their religious opinions were different.

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For instance, in canto 11, we are told that when Kōvaḷan and the saint Kāvundi Aḍigaḷ were on their way to Madura, they came across a Brahman returning from that city, and when they asked him the route, he gave them a description of two routes with an account of the Hindu gods and of the several *Siddhis* that could be obtained by worshipping them in the prescribed manner. After listening courteously and patiently to the entire narration, Kāvundi Aḍigaḷ replied;— "O, Brahman of good conduct who is learned in the Vedas, I have no desire to go through the cave (on the route suggested by the Brahman) for realising the ends you have described....... You go ahead to worship the gods you love; we shall also go our own way". It is clear from the context that the relations were very friendly, each tolerating the other.

The Jains who were settled in the Tamil country from the earliest days, were steeped in Tamil literature, and had therefore great respect for the Tamils. The difference between them and the Hindus was not much more than the difference between the Hindu *Sanyāsi* and the Hindu *Gṛhastha*. They did not condemn the Vedas, but they had their own literature which they valued most.

But the Jains of the sixth century A. D. who were disliked by the Hindus and whom the Hindus disliked were, if we are to believe Sambandar, disbelievers in the Vedas and were ignorant of Tamil literature. He speaks of them as people 'who wander about like monkeys without knowing either Tamil or Sanskrit'.[1]

[1]3rd Tirumuṟai. Padigam 297, St. 4.

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We may therefore, conclude that these were new Jains who came into the country during this period. So, it is worth while examining the possibilities for the arrival of Jains into the Tamil country in the sixth century A.D. or even earlier.

Dr. S. K. Aiyangar has utilised the chronological datum in the Lōka Vibhāga to show that Simhavarman was the name of the Pallava king ruling at Kāñcī in Śaka 380, and that it was the 22nd year of his reign. He deduces therefrom the conclusion that the starting year of the Pallava king was 436 A.D. He writes:—"The work was supposed to have been first given by word of mouth by Vardhamāna himself, and is said to have been handed down through Sudhāman and a succession of other teachers. Ṛṣi Simhasūri or Simhaśūra made a translation of it, apparently from Prākrit to Sanskrit. The work is said to have been finally copied, some considerable time before the date of the copy by Muni Sarva Nandin in the village of Pāṭalika (Cuddalore New Town) in the Pāṇa Rāṣṭra (Bāṇa country); then follows the date of the completion of the task. It was in the year 22 of Simhavarman, Lord of Kāñcī".[2]

From the above extract, we get the information that Pāṭalika was a great Jaina centre in the middle of the fifth century. We know that Kāñcī was from the earliest days a great centre of Sanskrit culture. In the time of Maṇimēkhalai, it was the seat of Buddhistic learning. In the days of Mayūra Śarman (Circa 475 A.D.) it was a place of Brahmanical learning. We may believe that with the coming of the Pallavas to Kāñcī,

[2] *Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*, p. 193—4.

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it became a great Hindu University. From the Vēlūr-pāḷaiyam plates, we get the information that Skanda Śiṣya, son of Vīrakūrca, "seized from king Satyasēna the 'ghaṭikā' of the twice-born".[3] It was only natural therefore that they should be the patrons of such a college at Kāñcī. So then, we can legitimately infer that the Pallavas were not patrons of the heretical Jaina institutes like the one at Pāṭaliputra. But conditions might have changed in the fifth century. We know that Mahēndra Varman (Circa 600-625 A. D.) was a Jain before he was converted to Śaivism by Appar. That he was not an illiterate person is seen from his very entertaining Sanskrit farce called Matta Vilāsa Prahasana. His predecessors might have been greatly influenced in favour of Jainism. If that was so, the Jaina learning must have flourished in the fifth century. The fact that the Lōka Vibhāga was copied out with elaborate care may itself be taken to be indicative of such a spread of Jaina culture. It is undoubted that the fourth century was the period of Sanskrit culture. Men like Kāḷidāsa were bound to inspire their contemporaries with a love of Sanskrit learning. The eagerness with which kings like Skandaśiṣya 'seized' a ghaṭikā, evidences it. The fourth century, again, was, it is commonly believed, the century in which many of the Purāṇas got their present Sanskrit form. The Guptas were the promoters of Sanskrit culture in the north. The Vākāṭakas did the same thing in the south. Pravarasēna II was either himself the author of the *Sētubandha Kāvyam* or had it written for him by Kāḷidāsa.[4] Till the Vākāṭakas

[3] S.I.I. Vol. II, p. 510.

[4] Dr. S. K. Aiyangar's *Vākāṭaka Supplement*, p. 21.

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were eclipsed by the Western Cāḷukyas, we may be certain that they did everything to encourage Sanskrit culture in the Dekkhan. Thus in North India, in the Dekkhan and in South India, the fourth century was a time of Sanskrit culture. It was indeed the golden age of all India.

If we examine the information contained in the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates relating to Nandi Varman III, we shall notice that verse 9 states that 'a host of kings, including Viṣṇugōpa had passed away' before Nandivarman 'caused to dance a powerful snake whose poison was in (its) eyes'. The next verse states that Simhavarman came afterwards, and he was the father of Simhaviṣṇu, who was the father of Mahēndra Varman. Thus the genealogy after Nandivarman I becomes very clear; that is:—

**Nandi Varman I**
|
**Simha Varman**
|
**Simha Viṣṇu**
|
**Mahēndra Varman, etc.**

But who were the previous kings? From the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates, we have the following table:—

**Aśōka Varman**
|
**others**
|
**Kālabhartṛ**
|
**Cūta Pallava**
|
**Vīrakūrca**
|
**Skanda Śiṣya**
|
**Kumāra Viṣṇu**
|
**Buddha Varmaṇ.**



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From Buddha Varman onwards, we do not have a clear account. The 'host of kings, including Viṣṇugōpa' come between Buddha Varman and Nandi Varman I. This information has been utilised by Dr. S. K. Aiyangār and others, and, on comparison with other genealogical lists, several tentative lists have been framed.[5] Whatever might be the order of succession between Buddha Varman and Nandivarman I, one thing is clear—it was a period of confusion and disorder. The Pallavas were not secure on their throne. Order was established only by Nandivarman who made a powerful 'snake dance', and by Simha Viṣṇu who wiped off the pride of his enemies, and extended his kingdom by 'seizing the country of the Cōḷas, established by the daughter of Kāvīra (i.e., the river Kāvēri)'.[6]

Now let us examine the dates of these monarchs. We know from the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates themselves that from 'Mahēndra was born Narasimha Varman I. . . . . . who took the pillar of victory standing in the centre of Vātāpi'.[7] Since we know that this is an allusion to Narasimha Varman's capture of Pulakēśin II's Vātāpi, and since Pulakēśin II was a contemporary of Hiuen Tsang, we can infer that Narasimha Varman ruled between A. D. 625 and 650. So Mahēndra Varman should be given the date Circa 600—625 A.D. Assigning the usual twenty-five years for the preceding monarchs, we can arrive at the result that Simhavarman and Simhaviṣṇu should have reigned between 550 and 600 A. D. Then Nandivarman I's date would be

[5] Dr. S. K. Aiyangār's *Contributions*, pp. 184—89.
[6] S.I.I. II, 510.
[7] V. 11.

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A.D. 525—550. So, we see that the confusion above referred to, the reason for which has to be found, terminated with 525 A.D. roughly.

From the Penugoṇḍa plates of the Western Ganga king Mādhava II referred to by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar[8] and by Mr. Gōpālan,[9] we know that Ari Varman Ganga and Mādhava Varman Ganga were installed on their throne by Simha Varman and Skanda Varman respectively. As pointed out by both Dr. S. K. Aiyangar and Mr. Gōpālan, Dr. Fleet has assigned A. D. 475 for the document. This Simhavarman could not therefore have been assigned the date 550—575 A. D. He was certainly an earlier king. We can infer that he was the Simha Varman referred to in the Lōka Vibhāga datum noticed above, where the date of his accession was calculated to be 436 A. D. Thus we can legitimately infer that Simhavarman ruled between 436 and 460 A. D. This monarch has been called by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar Simhavarman II. The Skanda Varman mentioned in the Ganga record might have been, as Dr. S. K. Aiyangar suggests,[10] the grand-father of Simha Varman II. Between these two there was the younger Mahārāja Viṣṇugōpa. There was another Viṣṇugōpa who was the son of Simhavarman II. Perhaps it was the latter that is alluded to in the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates. If he came to the throne after Simhavarman II, we may give him the date 460 A. D. We have to infer that he did not reign for long because,

[8] *Contributions*, p. 185.
[9] *Pallavas*, p. 42.
[10] *Contributions*, p. 169.

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the Pallava line gets into disorder and confusion with him. Thus the period of confusion began very probably within a few years of this Viṣṇugōpa's accession, i.e., by about 465 A.D., and continued till the rise of Nandivarman I in circa 525 A.D. It was thus a period of sixty years covering the latter half of the fifth century A.D., and the first quarter of the sixth century.

The question now arises as to who was the chief enemy of the Pallavas during this interval of time. I believe that whichever dynasty ruled, it must have been a Nāga dynasty. This is almost certainly indicated by the Vēlūrpaḷaiyam plates, verse 9. It runs, according to the translation in South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. II, page 510:—"After a host of kings including Viṣṇugōpa had passed away, was born Nandivarman, who with the favour of (the god) *Pinākapāṇi* (Śiva) caused to dance a powerful snake whose poison was in (its) eyes (*Dṛṣṭi Viṣa*)". But the real point of the original is not well brought out by this translation. The original is "Anugrahādyēna Pinākapāṇeḥ praṇarttito dṛṣṭi-viṣah Phaṇīndraḥ". The word 'Phaṇīndrah' cannot be tamely translated into a 'powerful snake'. It is to be understood to mean 'the lord of serpents', i.e., the 'Nāga king'. The attribute 'Dṛṣṭiviṣah' would then mean 'whose very look is poison (to enemies)'. The significance of these remarks will be seen when we notice the previous occasion in the same record where the word 'Phaṇīndra sutayā sahāgṛihīd rājacinham akhilam yaśōdhanaḥ'. In the translation, the verse runs "who simultaneously with (the hand of) the daughter of *the chief of serpents* grasped also the complete insignia of

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royalty and became famous".[11] If the word *Phaṇīndra* could mean the 'chief of serpents' in one place, why should it not mean the same in another place in the same document? Thus the inference that I make is that the very same Nāga family in which Vīrakūrca took a daughter as his bride, now got so powerful as to have mastery over the Pallavas between circa 465 A.D. and 525 A.D., and this mastery was put an end to by the rise of Nandivarman in that year (i.e., 525 A.D.). If so, which was the Nāga family with which Virakūrca made an alliance?

Dr. S. K. Aiyangar has investigated the question of Vīrakūrca's Nāga alliance, and his opinion is that the Nāgas referred to were most probably the 'Cuṭu Kula successors of the Āndhras in the territory immediately adjoining that of the Pallavas, and that Vīrakūrca was able by this marriage alliance to make good his position as ruler of the south-eastern viceroyalty of the Andhras'.[12] As for these Cūṭukulas or the Cūṭus, they were previously the feudatories of the Āndhras and, calling themselves Sātakarṇis as well as Nāgas, 'had for their capital Banavāse (Vaijayanti).[13] He proceeds to state "their inscriptions are found in Kānhēri, in Kanara and in the Shimoga district of Mysore. From their inscriptions so far made available to us, we know of three generations of these and two reigns, namely, that of Hārītiputra Viṣṇukanda Cuṭu Kulānanda Śātakarṇi and his grandson by the daughter Śiva Skanda Varman, also called Śiva Skanda Nāga Śrī in

[11] S.I.I. Vol. II, p. 510.
[12] *Contributions*, p. 180.
[13] *Contributions*, p. 179.

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the Banavāse inscription and Skanda Nāga Śātavāhana in the Kānheri inscription. These two rulers appear to have preceded the Kadambas almost without any interval. It would appear as though the Kadambas made the conquest of the territory which became associated with them from this Śiva Skanda Varman himself."[14] Thus we get to know something about the Nāgas with whom Vīrakūrca made his marriage alliance. They were the Cuṭu Nāgas.

If we enquire into the matter a little further, we shall discover that the Cuṭu Nāgas, the Kadambas and the Cāḷukyas were all of a common stock. We have seen that the Cüṭu Nāgas called themselves Hārītiputras. One of the inscriptions found on a pillar at Maḷavalli in the Shikhārpur Tāluq, Mysore, relates to a king named Hārītiputra Śātakarṇi of the Viṣṇupada Cuṭu family. Fleet says that this record further tells us that he belonged to the Mānavya *Gōtra*.[15] Thus we get the *Gōtra* also of the Cuṭus calling themselves Hārītiputras. We notice the Kadambas calling themselves Hārītiputras, and stating that they belonged to the *Mānavya-gōtra.* The inscription obtained from Tāḷguṇḍ in Mysore, issued in the time of Śānti Varman gives the following account:—"There was a family of Brahmans, Hārītiputras, and born in the Mānavya gōtra, who always planted the Kadamba tree", and so on.[16] Later Kaḍambas also speak of themselves in the same way. The Western Cāḷukyas of Badāmi say the same thing. "As stated in the opening lines of all the copper-plate

[14] *Contributions*, p. 179

[15] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, pp. 277—8.

[16] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 286.

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grants of this family, the Cāḷukyas belonged to the *gōtra* or race of Mānavya, and were the descendants of Hārīti".[17] They were also like the Kadambas under the guardianship of 'the seven mothers' and were worshippers of god 'Kārttikēya'. Thus, it is clear that they were all of the same race of Nāgas and all their kings could with equal propriety be called 'Phaṇīndra' or 'Lord of serpents'.

With this explanation, the statements in the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates become intelligible. From verse 6, we see that he made an alliance with the Nāgas, presumably the Cūṭu Nāgas. As Dr. S. K. Aiyangar has explained, the king thereby obtained the right of governing all the territory originally within the sway of the Cūṭu Nāgas. It is certain, that it was gained only though conquest. That is why he is spoken of as 'Vīrakūrca of the celebrated name'.[18] The Cūṭu Nāgas were of the Mānavya-gōtra as seen above and the Pallavas were of the Bhāradvāja gōtra.[19] So the marriage was permissible. Then came Skanda Śiṣya who is said[20] to have seized from King Satya Sēna the *Ghaṭikā* of the twice born. Who was this Satya Sēna, and why was his *Ghaṭikā* seized? This statement remains unintelligible as it stands. We have necessarily to infer that immediately after Vīrakūrca's time, troubles began. Some territory was apparently lost, and possibly Kāñcī and the *Ghaṭikā* or Brahman college there, also passed into the enemy's hands. The

[17] Bhandārkar. *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 180.

[18] V. 6.

[19] Fleet. *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 316

[20] V. 7,

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person who had the *Ghaṭikā,* and probably Kāñcī also, was Satya Sēna. His name indicates that he was one of the Vākāṭaka chieftains. Skanda Śiṣya was able, when he came to the throne, to get back the *Ghaṭikā.* But Kāñcī had to be recovered by his successor Kumāra Viṣṇu. This interpretation of the situation will become acceptable if we look at the genealogical list in the Vāyalūr pillar. Between Vīrakūrca and Skanda Mūla (apparently a variant of Skanda Śiṣya), we have three names—Candra Varman, Karāḷa and Viṣṇu-gōpa. These might have been the viceroys of the great Vīrakūrca. They were not able to retain the vast territories which came into the hands of the great Vīrakūrca, and so they were attacked by their neighbours and presumably one Satya Sēna got the Brahman *Ghāṭikā* (very probably in Kāñcī). This Skanda Mūla or Skanda Śiṣya, and his successor Kumāra Viṣṇu were therefore instrumental in restoring order in their dominions.

After the re-establishment of order by Kumāra Viṣṇu, his son Buddhavarman extended the Pallava dominions by carrying on war into the Cōḷa country, particularly because they were very weak, and that was why Buddhavarman was called 'the submarine fire to the ocean-like army of the Cōḷas.'[21] This again opened new trouble. The kingdom had become too extensive and the Pallavas who were advancing in the south could be easily attacked in the north. We have assigned 465 A.D. to the accession of Viṣṇugōpa, son of Buddhavarman. The enemies who had become troublesome now were no

[21] V. 8.

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longer the Cuṭu Nāgas, nor even the Vākāṭakas who had lost their greatness. The new rivals were the Kadambas. They were also Nāgas, as seen before. Calculating backwards from Mṛgēśavarman to whom Rice has assigned the date 570 A.D., and giving roughly twenty-five years to each of his predecessors Śānti Varman, Kākustha Varman, Bhagīratha, Kangu Varman and Mayūra Śarman (the first of them), we get the date circa A.D. 450 for the originator. The enemy who was thus the opponent of the Pallavas was Mayūra Śarman. According to the account about him, as seen from the inscription of Kākustha Varman, he is said to have come to the *Ghaṭikā* at Kāñcī for studies, and then getting into quarrel with a Pallava officer, he gave up his studies, became a warrior causing havoc to the Pallavas and laying the great Bāṇa under contribution. From the time of the alliance between the Cuṭu Nāgas and Vīrakūrca the insignia of royalty were nominally in the hands of the Pallavas. But, as we have seen, the Pallavas themselves were not quite safe immediately after Vīrakūrca. Yet, Kumāra Viṣṇu and Skanda Śiṣya had re-asserted their power and Viṣṇugōpa (son of Buddhavarman) was probably the Pallava contemporary of Mayūra Śarman. He was in great difficulties, because of the new Cōḷa conquest. So, he thought it wise to enter into a league with this powerful new-comer, and, recognising in him the ability to act as viceroy, he assigned to him the Bāṇa country, till now ruled by the nominal feudatories, the Cuṭu Nāgas. Mayūra Śarman wanted no more because he was just then coming up. He was the fittest person to rule the Bāṇa country, because he was himself a Nāga. Thus



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the Kadamba kingdom came into existence. The power of Mayūra Śarman must necessarily have increased enormously, and he and his successors were not likely to remain feudatories for any length of time. So within the half century of the establishment of Kadamba power, the Kadambas had made themselves masters of the situation partly owing to the geographical difficulties of the Pallavas, and partly also owing to the weakness of Viṣṇugōpa and his successors. The Pallavas were thus more or less thoroughly eclipsed by persons like Kākustha Varman, till Nandi Varman I came forward in circa 525 A.D., and made the Nāga 'dance'.[22] This assertion of Pallava superiority was probably possible because the Kadambas were troubled by the Cāḷukyas of Bādāmi who had just then come into prominence. Calculating backwards from the date of Kīrti Varman circa 570 A.D.,[23] we may conclude that Pulakēśin I Satyāśraya reigned in 550 A.D., Raṇarāga in 525 A.D., and Jaya Simha about 500 A.D. Of these Kīrtivarman is known to have 'attacked and possessed the Kadambas of Baṇavāsi'.[24] His brother Mangaḷēśa (Cāḷūkya) is said to have 'carried his arms to both the eastern and western seas.'[25] Thus, we may take it that towards the close of the sixth century and the beginning of the seventh, the Kadambas were overthrown by the Western Cāḷukyas of Bādāmī. This period of their eclipse was beneficial to Simhavarman and Simha Viṣṇu, the Pallavas. They could conveniently advance

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[22] V. 9.

[23] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 193.

[24] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 335.

[25] Ibid page 81.

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into the south as far as the Kāvēri.[26] But when Mahēndra Varman came to the throne, the Cāḷukyas had made themselves aggressive, and Pulakēśin II is said to have 'marched with a large army against the King of Kāñcīpura and laid siege to the town. He then crossed the Kāvēri and invaded the country of the Cōḷas, the Pāṇḍyas and the Kēraḷas. But these appear to have become his allies.[27] The reason why the Tamils welcomed the Cāḷukyas was that they had been troubled by the Pallavas before. Then came Narasimha Varman I who rallied his forces and defeated the Cāḷukyas at Vātāpi. But the Cāḷukyas were not finally crushed. The fighting continued during the succeeding centuries.

Thus it is seen that the chief power in the south between the fourth and the sixth centuries was that of the Pallavas, and that they had from time to time to encounter the opposition of the sub-branches of the Nāga race, to wit, the Cuṭu Nāgas, the Kaḍambas and the Western Cāḷukyas. Of these, the last two were the most serious rivals. Now, let us enquire into the religion professed by these ruling dynasties.

From the inscriptions, we have clear evidence to prove that the later Kaḍambas were, if not themselves Jains, at least ardent supporters of Jainism. There are three records of Mṛgēśavarman. "One from Dēvagere records a grant of land, at a village named Brihat Paralur to the 'gods, the supreme Arhats'. Another also from Dēvagere records that a village named Kālavanga was divided into three portions, which were

[26] V. 10.

[27] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 285.

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given, one to 'the gods, the divine Arhat or Arhats and the great Jinēndra', one to the community of the ascetics of the Śvētapaṭa Sect, and one to the community of the ascetics of the Nirgrantha sect. And the third, from Halsi records that Mṛgeśavarman caused a temple of Jina to be built, and gave some lands to the divine Arhats, for the Yāpanīyas, Nirgranthas, and Kūrcakas, at Palāśika."[28] Thus it is found that this Kadamba king was a staunch advocate of Jainism. His son Ravivarman was perhaps a little more in sympathy with Jains.

Fleet continues, "Of Ravivarman, we have two grants; one from Halsi records *various Jain ordinances that were established by him* at Palāśika, including provision for the celebration, every year, on the full moon day of the month of Kārttika of the eight days' festival of the god Jinēndra; and the other, also for Halsi records a grant of land to the god Jinēndra.[29]

We cannot help concluding from the above extracts that these two Kadambas were themselves Jains. Mr. Rice has given the date 570 A.D. to Mṛgēśavarma.[30] This would mean that Ravi lived about 600 A.D. Thus we have clear evidence of Jainism being the religion of the Kadamba monarchs towards the close of the sixth century.

Besides these, there are two more Kadamba kings named Kṛṣṇavarman and his son Dēvavarman. The

[28] Ibid. p. 288.
[29] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, 289.
[30] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, 291, footnote.

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grant relating to the former states that he celebrated the Aśvamēdha sacrifice. This shows that he was not a Jain. But the grant relating to his son records the gift of some land to the 'Yāpanīya communities...... for the purposes of a temple of the divine Arhat'.[31] This shows that he was in sympathy with the Jains. Mr. Rice has assigned 420 or 438 A.D. to Kṛṣṇavarman.[32] This would mean that we may assign about 460 or 470 A.D. to Dēvavarman of Jain sympathies. We have no means of discovering how there were related to Mayūra Śarman's Kadamba successors. It is perhaps safest to accept Dr. Fleet's explanation that these were 'two or three synchronous reigning branches of the family'.[33] If so, it was quite probable that some were more in sympathy with the Jains than the others. When they became powerful, they did everything to establish Jainism on a firm footing in the country. Thus in the sixth century Jainism flourished in the Kadamba country. It was from there that it came over to the Tamil country in that period.

Likewise, we see that among the Western Cāḷukyas, Pulakēśin I was a strong supporter of Jainism if the Aḷtēm plates relating to him are to be believed.[34] This king has the Śaka date corresponding to 488 A.D. But the prevalent opinion is that the record is spurious. Hence it is that we find Dr. Fleet stating that 'the first king, Pulakēśin I, established his power about 550 A.D., and his rule was

[31]Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 290.
[32]Fleet. *Bom. Gaz.*, p 291.
[33]Ibid. p. 291, Footnote 2.
[34]Ind. Ant. VIII, p. 340.

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apparently confined to the territory surrounding Bādāmi'.[35] But one cannot be quite certain that the record as a whole is spurious. The names of Pulakēśin's father (Raṇarāga), and grand-father (Jayasimha) are found to be all right. This Pulakēśin was the grand-father of the Pulakēśin II who was visited by Hiuen Tsang in 639 A.D. Considering the interval of time between 490 A.D. and 640 A.D. i.e., about 150 years, it does indeed appear that there is something wrong somewhere. Yet, the other facts relating to the document need not be false. Pulakēśin I is spoken of there, as having as his feudatory one Sāmiyāra, the son of Sivāra, who was the son of the Rāja Goṇḍa of the Rudra Nīla and Saindraka families. The Sēndrakas were surely the feudatories of the Western Cāḷukyas because we have Vinayāditya's stone inscription at Balagāmve in Mysore mentioning that fact.[36] These Sēndrakas are believed by Fleet to have been Nāgas.[37] They were also people of Jaina leanings, because we find that one Bhānu Śakti of the Sēndraka family requested Harivarma (Kadamba) to 'allot a village for the purposes of a Jaina temple which belonged to the community of ascetics called 'Aharṣṭi'.[38] The spurious inscription of Satyāśraya Pulakēśin I (referred to above) records the building 'of a Jaina temple and the allotment of certain grants to it, and gives the line of Jaina teachers Siddhanandin, Citakācārya, Nāgadēva and Jina Nandin'.[39]

[35] *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 335.
[36] Fleet, *Bom. Gaz.*, p. 369.
[37] Ibid., p. 281, note 3.
[38] Ibid., p. 290.
[39] Ep. Ind. VII. App. p. 2.

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Hence we see that the latter half of the sixth century was a period of Jaina prominence. That was the reason why we find even Mahēndravarman being influenced by Jaina teachings. Now, we have to discover why there was this Jaina reaction against Hinduism. The causes are not quite obvious. Yet, we may arrive at some probabilities. We have seen above that the Jains began to translate their prākrit scriptures into Sanskrit (e.g. Lōka Vibhāga). This movement must have begun in the fifth century. The general reason for that was merely a spirit of emulation. The cultured Hindus had done everything to promote the popular forms of Hinduism by collecting the Purāṇas, and writing other Sanskrit works. This naturally induced the learned Jains to do the same thing for Jainism so that their religion might not suffer. For this we have a parallel in European history. When the Renaissance movement brought Protestantism in its turn, the Roman Catholics re-organised themselves and, introducing changes among themselves, established what was called the Catholic Counter-Reformation. But there appears to have been a special reason also. That was the popular reaction against the impure lives led by several pseudo-*Bhaktas,* particularly by the Kāpālikas, etc. It is this that is borne witness to by the Matta Vilāsa Prahasana written by Mahēndravarman Pallava. The opening scene presents the disgusting spectacle of a drunken Kāpālika dallying with his sweetheart and disgracing himself in different ways, though now and then he utters praises of Śiva. He compares the tavern to a *Yāga Śālā* or place of Brahmanical sacrifice. The Śākya

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Bhikṣu who is presented to the reader is no more respectable, when he says that those who laid down rules of conduct for a Buddhist monk were servile and envious folk because they did not allow sexual pleasures, and drink.[40] The Pāśupata appears like a fool. He hears both sides and says "I am not able to settle this dispute".[41] The goodly company is completed when an *unmatta* or 'mad man' and a dog are made to appear. The object of the author is thus to express contempt towards these people who pretend to be Bhaktas but are in reality shams. The author does not introduce any Jain; because, apparently the Jain was neither a meat-eater nor a drunkard. That was also the reason why Jainism came into prominence during this short period of a century and a half. But after the Tēvāram hymners, Sambandar and Appar came up, Jainism had a natural death. The weakest point in the Jains was their disbelief in the Vēdas. However much people might be disposed to condemn the actions of individual Brahmans who led worldly lives giving full liberty to all their passions and desires, society as a whole could not bring itself to disbelieve in the Vēdas and the sacred scriptures. When therefore Śaivism was revived by these saints, it made a strong appeal to the people. Naturally enough, something in the nature of a rivalry also began when worshippers of Viṣṇu began to teach devotion to Viṣṇu as their religion. There was no real animosity between the two religions. On the other hand, there was a healthy rivalry which made the devotees of the respective gods vie with one another in

[40] *Matta Vilāsa*, p. 12.

[41] Nāyam Vyavāharō Mayā paricchettum Śakyate, p. 23,

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their devotion. The praises they sang in honour of Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively evinced a great deal of similarity in form and subject matter. Thus the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries were centuries of devotion in the Tamil country. The Bhaktas attached greater importance to sincerity and righteous conduct than to doctrine. Many of the Tēvāram songs reveal a fairly thorough knowledge of the Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy, but it is subordinated to the virtue of self-surrender to God and his chosen Bhaktas. When we come to the tenth century, philosophy is given more prominence and popular interest centres round the teachings of the doctrine.

### ii. *The Nature of Śiva worship in the days of Sambandar.*

First, let us consider the nature of Śiva worship prevailing in South India as it is revealed in the songs of Sambandar and Appar. Śiva worship, then as now, consisted in going to different temples, worshipping or taking part in the worship of Śiva there, singing songs, conducting religious festivals, and so on. We find the Tēvāram saints moving about from place to place, and singing of God Śiva in each one of the temples they visited. The number of temples visited is exceedingly large, and they happen to be scattered all over South India. Sambandar has sung of about 24 places in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, the northern-most being Kāḷahasti. On the whole in this region, only 32 places have been celebrated in song by the hymners. The Periya Purāṇam states that he was staying there for some time (*Tirugñāna Sambanda Purāṇam,* St. 1025). The chief



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places of importance visited by him in this region were Kāḷahasti, Tiruvoṟṟiyūr, Mailāpūr, Tiruvālangāḍu, and Kāñcī. In the region called Magadai Nāḍu or Naḍu Nāḍ (central country, practically the South Arcot District), Sambandar has sung of Śiva in 15 places, out of a total Tēvāram list of 22. The chief of them are Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, Tiruppādirippuliyūr, Tirukkōyilūr, Tirumudukunṟam (Vriddhācalam) and Tiruvadigai. We need not mention the Cōḷa country, for the places left out by Sambandar are very few. In the Pāṇḍya country, he has sung of 13 places out of 14, only Tiruchuḻiyal has been left out. The places included in this list reach as far south as Tinnevelly and Kuṟṟālam (near Tenkāśi). In the Koṅgumaṇḍalam he has sung of four out of seven. The rest have been sung about by Sundaramūrti. Appar has sung of only Koḍumuḍi in the Kongu country. Sambandar has evidently gone along the bank of the Kāvēri as far north as Bhavāni. Thus only the Cēramaṇḍalam was left out by Sambandar. The gap was filled up by Sundarar.

So we find that Sambandar visited 200 to 250 temples at least. On the whole we have Tēvāram songs for 275 temples out of which about ten lie beyond the limits of the Tamil country. In this connection it is very interesting to note the difference in point of time between the days when the *Śilappadikāram* was written and the days of Sambandar. Looking at the list of temples visited by Sambandar in the Cōḷa country, we see that throughout the lower course of the Kāvēri there were as many as 190 temples, and the distance between one temple and another did not in the

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average exceed three to four miles. Between Cidambaram and Śāykkāḍ very near Kāvēripaṭṭiṇam or Puhār, that is, within a distance of roughly thirty miles, there are ten temples (appearing in the Tēvāram songs), namely, Cidambaram, Tiruvēṭkaḷam, Tirunelvāyil, Tirukkaḻipālai, Tirunallūrperumaṇam, Tirumahēndirappaḷḷi, Tiruttenmullai Vāyil, Tirukkalikkāmūr, Tiruccāykkāḍ and Tiruppallavanīccuram. The same is the case elsewhere also. This may very well be contrasted with the condition of the country during the days of *Śilappadikāram*. Kōvalan is told by Kāvundi Aḍigaḷ., that the route was difficult and dangerous, that led to the Pāṇḍya's country from the Cōḷa country.[42] Again she says to the same effect. "Hear O!, Kōvala, this path will give different kinds of troubles."[43] Then follows a graphic description of the dangers themselves, all of which point to the fact that the route lay through an unfrequented country.[44] She concludes thus "There is no broad road there so that we may avoid the fields and the groves."

On the other hand, there is an account in the *Periya Purāṇam* about the journey of Sambandar and others from the Cōḷa country to the Pāṇḍya country. First the saint and his followers go visiting several

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[42] "காடிடை யிட்டநாடு நீர் கழிதற்கரிது"

Śilappadikāram. Canto 10, line 53.

[43] கோவலன் காணாய் கொண்டவிந்நெறிக்
கேதந்தருவன யாங்கும் பலகேண்மோ

Śilappadikāram. Canto 10, lines 64—65.

[44] வயலுஞ் சோலையு மல்லதி யாங்கணு
மயல்படக் கிடந்த நெறியாங்கில்லை.

Śilappadikāram, Canto 10, lines 66—67.

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shrines lying to the south of the Kāvēri, lying between Tiruvārūr and Vēdāraṇyam. From there he goes to Pirānmalai or Tirukkoḍuṅgunṟam. The journey from Tiruvuśāttānam and Tirukkoḍuṅgunṟam was not at all unpleasant. On the other hand, all along the way there were *'Maḍams'* or rest-houses, houses of *Bhaktas*, *Yāga śālas* or places where sacrifices were performed for villages.[45] True, this was written a few centuries after Sambandar. But it is not to be dismissed on that account as altogether inadmissible evidence.

This disafforesting of the country must have been largely due to the increase of population and commercial prosperity. But it is just these that are responsible for the growth of temples also, for temples satisfy a more or less universal need among the people; so, the greater the population, the greater the need for temples and they cannot be constructed by people who are themselves struggling for their ordinary means of livelihood.

The question now arises as to when these temples arose. We know that Kō-cceṅgaṉ was responsible for the construction of seventy temples. Presumably there were not many temples before that time, although from the *Śilappadikāram*, we have clear evidence of there having been some temples. That is the inference we must arrive at if we are rightly to interpret the stories of Kō-cceṅgan and Kaṇṇappar. In the legend about Kō-cceṅgaṉ, we are told that there was a *Liṅga* at

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[45] இடமெங்கு மந்தணர்களோது கிடையாகலிலை
மடமெங்குந் தொண்டர்குழா மனையெங்கும் புனைவதுவை
நடமெங்கு மொலியோவா நற்பதிகள் அவை கடந்து.
*Sambandar Purāṇam*, St. 627.

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Tiruvānaikkāval, and that a spider desired to protect the God from the sun and the rain, and so wove everyday a cobweb over it. An elephant thought this was a sacrilege and so poured water over it every day. This shows that the *Liṅga* was exposed, and that there being no wall or anything of that sort, an elephant could easily go near the *Liṅga* and do what it chose with it. Again, if there was a temple in Kāḷahasti it would not have been possible for the hunter to go near the God and offer his meat to it. The Brāhman priest, who got irritated with this unseemly conduct would have locked up the door of the temple. But since there was no such building he could not do it. Further we have some legends even now current that a cow was in the habit of freely pouring its milk over a *liṅga*. This would be possible only if there was no structure. From such accounts, we may legitimately conclude that there have been innumerable such *liṅgas* which were not housed in temples. That also accounts for the fact that even to-day every Śiva temple regards a tree as the *Kṣētra Vṛkṣa,* or the temple tree. In fact, it was the tree alone that provided the necessary shelter, not for the God (for He needed none) but for those who went to worship the deity. We can well conceive of a time when people flocked together to worship a deity, and after finishing their worship, took rest under the shade of a tree in the neighbourhood. That would become inseparably associated with the deity itself and so, in time, could come to be regarded as the temple tree. The sanctity thus attaching itself to the tree would stand in the way of its removal even after the temple was constructed. That is why we find the trunk of a *Kaḍamba* tree pre-

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served with great care in the Kadamba Vana Kṣētra i.e. Madura. This ought not to be taken for tree-worship, as may easily be done. If tree-worship was prevailing among the Śaivas of olden days, it is impossible to understand why all kinds of trees, including the palmyra, became *Kṣētra Vṛkṣas*, and also why our ancestors had no scruples in cutting down or utilising in any manner they chose such trees as the *Marudam*. It is well known that the cow is a sacred animal with the Hindus, and that no believing Hindu will dare to kill it. This should have been the manner of treating the *Maruda* trees also, because the *Maruda* tree is the *Kṣētra Vṛkṣa* of a large number of temples. But it is the very same tree which was and is being largely used for house construction. Even as regards the banyan tree, it is almost certain that popular respect for it is due to its great usefulness in offering shelter for weary travellers. If small stone Gaṇēśas are placed underneath it, it only shows that those who began the practice were desirous of making travellers entertain godly thoughts when they rested under the tree.

Thus, if there were temples before Kō-cceṅgaṇ, they must have been very few in number. This is still further proved by the fact that even at the present day, most of the temples in Malabar are only *Kāvus*. There are few temples in Malabar which can compare favourably with the magnificent structures of the Tamil country. In fact the Malayāḷam word for a temple is '*Ambalam*' or 'open space' as opposed to the Tamil word '*Koyil*' or 'the house of (*Kō*) God'. Now, '*Kāvu*', or '*kā*' in Tamil, merely means 'a tree'. It proves that

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the purpose now served by the temple was in olden days served only by a tree. We have several temples going by that name, e.g. Tirukkōḍikkā, Tirukkōlakkā, Tirunellikkā, Tiruvānaikkā, &c. The expression Tillai Ambalam very beautifully expresses the idea. It literally mean the 'Tillai Open Space, or the open space surrounded by the Tillai Vana, or the forest of Tillai trees.' Later on, a philosophical interpretation was placed upon it. Kō-ccengaṇ had already built the temple and so the word *'Am|balam'* could no longer mean 'open space.' So the word had to be interpreted as meaning the 'open space of the heart' (Cidākāśa or Cidambaram).

So then, it will be reasonable to conclude that most of the temples visited by the *Tēvāram* hymners were constructed after the days of Kō-ccengaṇ. It is even doubtful if temples had been constructed in all the places visited by the saints. It does not mean that worship was not conducted there. From the earliest times, several sacred places ought to have been visited, and the god there should have been worshipped. But the temple was not inevitable for worship. As a matter of fact, it would be impossible to construct temples in certain holy places, because the god there was invisible, not being a *Liṅgam*. There is a big impenetrable forest immediately to the east of the Mookāmbikā temple (Kollūr in South Kanara) extending to a distance of roughly five miles, and the forest is called 'Ambā Vanam', or the forest of Ambikā. The people of the locality believe, even at the present day, that it is the residence of Ambikā. Such must have been Tillai Vana

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before Kō-ccenġaṇ built the temple of Cidambaram. The truth of this remark will become plain if a few names of the sacred shrines are taken up for examination; e.g. Tiru Ālaṅgāḍu, Tiru Iḍumbā Vanam, Kāraikkāḍu, Kollikkāḍu, Śāykkāḍu, Talai Ālaṅgāḍu, Talaiccangāḍu, Maṟaikkāḍu, Tiruveṇkāḍu, Tiruvēṟkāḍu, clearly were forests. If temples were constructed there, that could have happened, generally speaking, only after they became villages. Some of these should have developed into villages and towns for the reason that they were holy places. We can be sure about Śāykkāḍu. This was the place where, according to the Periya Purāṇam the saint Iyaṟpagai Nāyanār lost sight of Śiva who had appeared before him demanding his wife. Similarly other Tēvāram names show that they were only resting places, (*Tuṟai*= தங்குமிடம்).[46] Usually these were under some tree. Hence the name is generally connected with a tree; e.g. Arattuṟai, Anbilālanduṟai, Tiruvālanduṟai, Āvaḍutuṟai, Kaḍambanduṟai, Kuraṅgāduturai, Śōṟṟutturai, Parāytturai, Pālaitturai, &c. The origin of these villages and the temples in them, is seen in the word '*Tuṟai*' which means a "resting place". When people were going long distances, they had to halt somewhere and usually the shade of a tree was very valuable for that purpose. The tree itself should be a big one having a number of branches. The 'Āl' tree was the most valuable of all such trees and that is the reason why we have a number of Ālandurais. Realising the importance of such places, philanthropic souls would have first erected

[46] Tamil Lexicon 2005. (Madras University).

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small structures with the image of a deity within, and when, in course of time, the place became sacred on account of the deity, a village would grow round it. There were, therefore, several such villages in the period of the Tēvāram. The point of importance for us is that these villages were possible because of the existence of pious men whose devotion induced them to erect temples in such convenient places. That is a consequence of the spread of the *Bhakti* paths of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. In fact the *Caryā Sādhana* included such works of piety.

The Tēvāram hymns reveal the manner in which worship was being conducted. Many of them speak about songs sung in the presence of Śiva both in Tamil and in Sanskrit. The songs themselves were not mere poems containing spiritual truths. They were written in such a way that they could be sung by a company of people, some of whom played upon musical instruments, and some performed dances. This is seen from the hymn which speaks of 'the sound of women's feet, of the ornaments in those feet, of the flute, of the drum and of the festivals conducted at Pugalūr (Shiyāli)'.[47] Here we have allusion to the playing of the flute, the beating of the drum and the conduct of festivals. *Padigam* 6 of Sambandar mentions the devotional practices of the Brahmins of Tirumarugal. "The Brahmans

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[47] கழலினோசை சிலம்பின் னொலியோசை கலிக்கப் பயில்கானில்
குழலினோசை குறட்பாரிடம் போற்றக் குனித்தாரிட மென்பர்
விழவினோசை யடியார் மிடைவுற்று விரும்பிப் பொலிந்தெங்கும்
முழவினோசை முந்நீரயர்வெய்த முழங்கும் புகலூரே.

Sambandar, Padigam 2, St. 6.

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who make it their practice to chant the Vēda and the Vēdānga, praise your feet every day."[48] Again, "The thread-wearing Brahmans who with ghee light the three sacrificial fires, praise you".[49] "The fire raised by the Brahmans wearing the sacred thread and the deer-skin",[50] etc. It was not only the *Arcakas* (worshipping priests) that conducted the Śiva *Pūja* in the temple. It appears that in some places any one could do it. This seems to be the meaning of the stanza which runs; "Validāyam where stands the great God. The *Bhaktas* and others pour water over Him and place flowers on Him and men of the world praise Him with suitable words"[51] The same thing is evidenced by another stanza in a different place which says "The devotees who worship Him always with plenty of water."[52] In speaking of Tiruvāvūr, Sambandar uses very significant expressions to bring out what must have been the practice in his time, the constant singing of songs.[53] Some who took part in such singing seem to

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[48] அங்கமும் வேதமுமோது நாவரந்தணர் நாளுமடிபரவ. St. 1.

[49] ibid. St. 2. நெய்தவழ் மூவெரி காவலோம்பு நேர்புரி நூன்
மறையாளரேத்தே

[50] ibid. St. 3. தோலொடு நூலிழை சேர்ந்த மார்பர் தொகு
மறையோர்கள் வளர்த்த செந்தீ.

[51] St. 1 of Padigam 3 Sambandar.
பத்தரொடு பலரும் பொலியம் மலரங்கைப் புனல்தூவி
ஒத்தசொல்லி யுலகத்தவர் தாந்தொழுதேத்த வுயர்சென்னி
மத்தம் வைத்தபெருமான் பிரியாதுறைகின்ற வலிதாயம்.

[52] நிறைபுனல் கொடுதனை நினைவொடு நியதமும் வழிபடுமடியவர்.
Pad. 21, St. 4.

[53] 'பண்ணியல் பாடலறாத வாரூர்'
'பத்திமைப் பாடலறாத வாரூர்'
'பாவியல் பாடலறாத வாரூர்' etc. etc. Sam. Pad. 8.

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have been women folk. That is indicated in another stanza of the same *padigam*: "In the gates surrounding the temple can be seen festivals in which women clasp each others' hands and sing songs".[54] The nature of the festival is hinted in another stanza which says "In the joyous festival, young girls with waists like creepers enter the arena with young men and praise Him with sweet songs."[55] In a stanza referring to the god at Tiruninṟiyūr, we have a mention of different kinds of drums and other musical instruments, one of which is characteristically indigenous to the Tamil country, viz. the *Paṟai*.[56] There must also have been processions of the God in the streets. The *Padigam* on Tiruvīḻimiḻalai has an allusion to it. "Tiruvīḻimiḻalai, where the streets are full of the sound of the great festival (procession)."[57] During such processions flags were also carried.[58] In some places, there must have been car festivals also, as at the present day. Shiyāḻi was one such. Its streets have been described as "long streets along which the car passes."[59] It was natural that

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54 ஒற்றைவிடையினர் நெற்றிக்கண் ணுருறைபதியா குஞ்செறி
கொண்மாடம்
சுற்றியவாசலின் மாதர் விழாச்சொற் கவிபாட விதானநல்கப்
பற்றிய கையினர் வாழுமாவூர். ibid., St. 6.

55 கோவிலழாவினரங்கதேறிக் கொடியிடைமாதர்கண் மைந்தரோடும்
பாலெனவே மொழிந்தேத்துமாவூர். ibid., St.9.

56 பறையின்னொலி சங்கின்னொலி பாங்காரவுமார
அறையும் மொலி யெங்கும் மவை யறிவாரவர்தம்மை. Pad. 18, St. 3.

57 தெருவினில்வரு பெருவிழவொலி மலிதரவளர் திருமிழலையே.
Pad. 20, St. 4.

58 கடிகொள் கொன்றை கலந்த சென்னியான்
கொடிகொள் விழவார் கோலக்காவுள்........... Pad. 23. 6.

59 தேராரு நெடுவீதித் திருத்தோணிபுரத். .... Pad. 60. 5.

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places like Kaḻumalam (or Shiyāḻi) which were very old towns, must have been important even during the days of the *Śangam*, and rich enough to conduct the annual festivals with great pomp. The old city of Puhār had got transformed into Pallavanīccaram during the time of Sambandar, and it had also its regular festivals. From one of the stanzas it becomes clear that different kinds of musical instruments sounded every day in the temple of that town.[60] The music resounding from the rocky hills of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai is also described.[61] In Kumbakōṇam dancing to the accompaniment of songs seems to have become a well-established practice.[62] We may assume that the places where there were regular festivals and daily music and dancing were towns of some importance. These practices involve expense and require co-operation. Numbers of people must join together for conducting the car festival. Similarly if there should have been dancing and music in front of the temples, there must be professional singers and dancers maintained by the temple. That was why small villages could not afford it. On the other hand, almost all rich towns were adopting the practice, e.g. Sambandar speaks of its prevalence in Kāñcī.[63]

60 குழலினோசை வீணைமொந்தை கொட்ட முழவதிரக்
கழலினோசை யார்க்க வாடுங் கடவுளிருந்தவிடம். Pad. 65. 6.

61 முந்தியெழுந்த முழவினோசை முதுகல் வரைகண்மேல். Pad. 69. 7.

62 தேனார் மொழியார் திளைத்தங்காடித் திகழுங்குடமூக்கில். Pad. 72. 7.

63 பாராரு முழவமொந்தை குழலியாழொலி
சீராலே பாடலாடல் சிதைவில்லதோர்
ஏரார்பூங் கச்சியேகம்பனை. 184. 3.

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Madura was one the cities which could very well afford these. But we do not find Sambandar mentioning it. That is because Madura was being ruled by a Jain during Sambandar's days, and all his songs about Madura relate to the Jains alone.

In none of the *Tēvārams* singing of places ending in 'Tuṟai' do we find a mention of music or dancing. That is evidence of the fact that such places were petty villages. Mayilāḍutuṟai, however, is an exception. But it had become very populous. That is also indicated by the change of its name into Māyūram. In other words, it was no longer a village. It was even in the days of Sambandar an important town. So, in another place the poet calls it a '*Pati*' or town.[64] Judging from the nomenclature we may infer that Shiyāḻi was a more important place than Māyavaram; for Sambandar calls the former 'Vēṇu *puram*', 'Brahma *puram*', &c., while he speaks of Māyavaram only as a *Pati*. That also explains why there was a car-festival in Shiyāḻi during the time of Sambandar. We do not find Sambandar speaking of music or dancing in places ending in '*Kuḍi*' such as Cengāṭṭaṅguḍi, Karukkuḍi, Kaṟkuḍi, Teṅguḍi, &c. But we see that Maṅgalakkuḍi is an exception. There he speaks of the sounds of the *Paṟai*, etc.[65] That shows that except the last, all the others were very small places which could not afford the luxury of having professional dancers or musicians.

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64 எந்தமடி கட்கினிய தானமது வேண்டி லெழிலார் பதியதாம்
.................மயிலாடுதுறையே. 329.2.

65 பறையினொ டொலிபாடலு மாடலும். 146. 4.

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There are a few places with names ending in 'Kōyil'. Leaving aside Cidambaram which is specially called '*Kōyil*', the others number only six. e.g. Tirukkaṇṇār Kōyil, 2. Nannilattupperuṁgōyil, 3. Mīyaccūr Iḷam Kōyil, 4. Kaccūr ālak kōyil, 5. Vaigan Māḍakkōyil, and 6. Ambar-perundirukkōyil. The last two are expressly mentioned as having been built by Kō-cceṅgaṇ.[66] No. 4 is sung about only by Sundaramūrti. It is situated in the Chingleput district, lying between Tiruvānmiyūr and Tiru-Iḍaiccuram both of which had been visited by Sambandar. If it had been existing at the time of Sambandar, it would not have been left out by him, because we notice that he has visited most of the shrines. Very probably therefore, it was built after Sambandar's time. But the tradition about No. 2 is that it was built by Kō-cceṅgaṇ.[67] We cannot say how far we can rely upon it. Somehow, Sambandar did not sing about it. This seems very likely because the only importance attached to it is that it was there that God appeared before Sundarar in a Brahman's form and gave him food. Thus, we may conclude that only five '*Kōyils*' remained at the time of Sundarar. The fact that two of them were built by Kō-cceṅgaṇ and that the term "*Kōyil*" (by itself) is definitely applied to Cidambaram, the place of special importance during the time of that monarch, raises the presumption that the other three were also built by him. It is noticeable that in the shrine at Tirukkaṇṇār Kōyil, Viṣṇu in the form of

[66] *Vide* Padigams 276 & 277.

[67] Murugēśa Mudaliar: "Śiva Sthala Mānmiya Ccurukkam, P. 102.

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Vāmana is spoken of as worshipping Śiva.[68] We know that Kō-ccengaṇ attached equal importance to Viṣṇu and Śiva. The device adopted to ensure the worship of both the gods seems to be Kō-ccengaṇ's. If, therefore, the shrines whose name end in the word *Kōyil* can be taken to be shrines built by Kō-ccengaṇ the question arises as to what happened to the rest. Out of 70 temples, if only six, (or seven including Tiruvānaikkā) Śiva shrines were to survive, it shows that much time must have passed between the time of Kō-ccengaṇ and that of Sambandar. Further, it is also evidence to show that temples were being built only in brick and mortar. Allowing, therefore, three hundred or three hundred and fifty years as the life of an ordinary brick and mortar temple, we get a fresh support for the date we have assigned to Kō-ccengaṇ, i.e. the middle of the third century A. D. We may even infer that one of the reasons why Mahēndra Varman built his temples of stone was that he knew only too well the fate of Kō-ccengaṇ's structures.

As for the temples which we have taken to have been built by Kō-ccengaṇ, we notice that in all of them, there was singing and dancing. The Tirukkaṇṇār Kōyil seems to have been built in a forest, for the stanza runs : "In the jungle where different kinds of music issue forth."[69] Sundaramūrti has sung of Nannilat-

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[68] மறுமாணுருவாய் மற்றிணையின்றி வானோரைச்
செறுமாவலிபாற் சென்றுலகெல்லா மளவிட்ட
குறுமாணுருவன் றற்குறியாகக் கொண்டாடும்
கறுமாகண்டன் மேயது கண்ணார் கோயிலே. 101. 5.

[69] பல்லியல் பாணிப்பாரிட மேத்தப்படு கானின். 101. 3.

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tupperuṁ-Kōyil and in the first stanza, he mentions 'God who receives alms from the sweet voiced damsels who sing about Him.'[70] Very probably, we have to infer from this that it was the custom to observe the festival of taking out the image on the pretence of receiving alms.[71]

That there was music etc. in Cidambaram is seen from *Padigam* 259. It was inevitable because the God Himself is *Naṭarāja* or the King of Dancers.[72] Sambandar speaks of music in the two temples about which he definitely states they were built by Kō-cceṅgaṉ; i.e. in the Vaigal Māḍakkōyil, the dance called "the swan's tread" was practised.[73] The temple was a very lofty one for Sambandar says that it reached the clouds.[74] That partly accounts for the fact of its having lasted so long. Again, this town of 'Vaigal' is, as seen in the quotation above, described as a 'great city' '*Mā-nagar*'. Therefore, if there was any danger of the temple falling down, it could have been repaired by the rich citizens of the neighbourhood. The city could also afford to have dancers.

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[70] தண்ணியல் வெம்மையினான் தலையிற் கடைதோறும்பலி
பண்ணியன் மென்மொழி யாரிட ங்கொண்டுழல் பண்டரங்கன்.
Sundarar, 98. 1.

[71] This seems to refer to the particular festival in which Śiva appears in the form of Bhikṣāṇḍār, begging for alms to get rid of a curse. *S. K.*

[72] ..........."இசைபாடுவ பாரிடமா
நட்டமே நவில்வாய்."........... 259. 2.

[73] மடவன நடைபயில் வைகன் மாநகர்க்
குடதிசை நிலவியமாடக் கோயிலே. 276. 5.

[74] ...........மேற்றிசை
வருமுகிலண வியமாடக் கோயிலே. 276. 7.

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What has been said about Vaigal applies with equal force to Tiru Ambarp-perundirukkōyil praised by Sambandar in *Padigam* 277. That is also described as a great city ('அம்பர்மாநகர்' 277.1). Here also great festivals were celebrated.[74a] The name of the god there is Brahmapuri Nādar. So, Kō-ccengaṇ's intention was probably to make the shrine as important as that at Shiyāḻi, as Brahmapuri was another name for Shiyāḻi. Both the temples lie to the south of the Kāvēri.

If we now examine the details about Tiruvānaik-kāval, we shall discover that Sambandar mentions festivals there also.[74b]

From all these references, it is clear that Kō-ccengaṇ must have done very much to systematise worship in the temples. Music and dancing must have become an essential part of Śiva worship. Along with these, the reciting of the Vedas should have been resorted to. In fact, these practices were not introduced for the first time by Kō-ccengaṇ. He seems only to have taken care to make proper provision for each and every item. That is the reason why his name was held in such great esteem by men like Sambandar. He says that Śiva showed great mercy to 'Śengaṇ'.[75] Thus Śengaṇ is alluded to in very many places by the *Tēvāram* hymners. The only detail about him found in the Periya Purāṇam is that he built several temples. One who did it would surely have done his best to make the

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[74a] அங்கணி விழவமரம்பர் மாநகர் 277. 5.

[74b] விழவாரும் வெணுவலின்மேவிய 159. 1.

[75] செங்கட்பெயர் கொண்டவன் செம்பியர்கோன் அங்கட்கருணை பெரிதாயவனே. 159. 5.



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worship comprehensive and lasting. This example of his must have been followed by some of his successors at least, and that is why we have evidences of festivals &c. in several other places. Of these, some may be taken up. From *padigam* 192, we get to know that the *Pūśam* festival in the month of Tai was conducted in Tiruviḍaimarudūr which is even today one of the most sacred shrines of the south. The stanza says: "O! God, you have entered the Tiruviḍaimarudūr temple where men of high penance and self-restraint, *Dēvas* and others come to make the world shine on the occasion of *Tai Pūśam* when learned Brahmans praise you with their Vedic chants".[76] The dancing of damsels in the temple of Tiruvaiyāṟu is said "to confound the monkeys there which think that they hear the sound of the coming rain."[77] There was some festival conducted in Tirukkaḍavūr also as there is an allusion to it.[78] This place also was a flourishing town, for its towers, turrets, and shops are mentioned.[79] The music of the young devotees of Tirukkarukāvūr also is mentioned.[80] The

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[76] வருந்திய மாதவத்தோர் வானோரா னேரேனோர் வந்தீண்டிப்
பொருந்திய தைப்பூசமாடி யுலகம் பொலிவெய்தத்
திருந்திய நான்மறையோர் சீராலேத்த விடைமருதில்
பொருந்திய கோயிலே கோயிலாகப் புக்கீரே. 192. 5.

[77] புலனைந்தும் பொறிகலங்கி நெறிமயங்கி யறிவழிந்திட்டைமேலுந்தி
அலமந்தபோதாக வஞ்சேலென்றருள் செய்வான மருங்கோயில்
வலம்வந்த மடவார் கணடமாட மழையென்றஞ்சிச்
சிலமந்தி யலமந்து மரமேறி முகில்பார்க்கும் திருவையாறே. 130. 1.

[78] .............கடவூரதனுள்
விழாவொலி மல்கிய வீரட்டானத்தர னல்லனே. 266. 4.

[79] கடையுடை நன்னெடு மாடமோங்கும் கடவூர். 266. 1.

[80] பழகவல்ல சிறுதொண்டர் பாவின்னிசை............ 304. 3.

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Tiruppallavanīccaram of Puhār was also in a flourishing condition.[81] The dancing there is specially noticed. The dancers are described as having ornaments in their forehead.[82] Among the musical instruments in use there are mentioned the *yāḻ*, the *mondai* and the *paṟai*.[83] Kumbakōṇam was famous for its dancing.[84] From the places referred to by Sambandar as noted for music and dancing, we seem to have reason to conclude that it was in the temples of the Cōḷa country alone that such accomplishments were greatly appreciated. For instance Tiruceṅgōḍ was a famous temple at that time, and was called Tirukkoḍimāḍa-cceṅgunṟūr, thus indicating that it was a flourishing shrine. Yet, we have no mention of dancing or music there. That was in the Kongu country. Kānappēr or Kāḷaiyār Kōyil was also a famous temple in the Pāṇḍya country. There too we do not find any music or dancing. But that might have perhaps been due to the fact that it was a jungle country which was only sparsely populated, for we find festivals and dancing having prevailed in Tirunelvēli.[85] Yet, it may be concluded that these were more prevalent in the fertile region of the Kāvēri.

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81 குழலினோசை வீணைமொந்தை கொட்டமுழவதிர. 65. 6.

82 பட்டநெற்றியார் நட்டமாடுவர். 371. 2.

83 பண்ணில் யாழினர் டயிலுமொந்தையர் 371. 4.
பறைகொள் பாணியர். 371. 10.

84 தேனார் மொழியார் திளைத்தங்காடித் திகழுங்குடமூக்கில். 72. 7.

85 ............அரிவை யராடல்பேணத்
திங்களுள் விழமல்கு திருநெல்வேலி... ......350. 9.

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Perhaps the fullest description of festivals outside the Cōḷa country in Sambandar's songs is that found in his *padigam* relating to Mylapore. There he speaks of almost all the monthly celebrations conducted even at the present day in the Kapālīśvara temple.[86] This was even then one of the few most famous shrines in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. The others were Tiruvoṟṟiyūr, Kāñcī, Tirukkaḻukuṉṟam and Kāḷahasti.

From the *Tēvārams* of Sambandar relating to one or two temples, we discover that local *Purāṇams* had already developed. For instance, in the opening stanza relating to Tiruvuśāttānam (Tirukkōyilūr) the god of the temple is described as having been worshipped by Jāmbavān, Sugrīva and Hanumān.[87] Again, the whole *padigam* relating to Puḷḷirukkuvēḷūr or Vaittīśvaran Kōyil reveals the popular belief that Sampāti and Jaṭāyu (the two sacred birds) worshipped Śiva there.[88]

The temple at Uṟaiyūr, otherwise called Mūkkīccaram, has been specially praised by Sambandar. He says that the god there was worshipped by all the three Tamil monarchs, i.e., the Pāṇḍya, Cōḷa and Cēra.[89]

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[86] Padigam 183, beginning with மட்டிட்ட

[87] நீரிடைத்துயின்றவன் றம்பி நீள் சாம்புவான்
பேருடைச் சுக்கிரீவன் னநுமான் றொழக்
காருடைநஞ்சுண்டு காத்தருள் செய்த. 291. 1.

[88] உள்ளார்ந்த சடைமுடி யெம்பெருமானா ருறையுமிடந்
தள்ளாய சம்பாதி சடாயென்பார் தாமிருவர்
புள்ளானூர்க் கரையனிடம் புள்ளிருக்குவேளூரே. 179. 1.

[89] ............தென்னவன் செம்பியன் வில்லவன்
சேருமூக்கீச்சுரத்தடிகள்........... 256. 9.

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Sambandar has apparently written the *padigam* with the object of making the reader realise that in reality it was Śiva himself who was the ruler of the Cēra, the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍya kingdoms. The last stanza vaguely hints that this was his object. There he says "Sambandar who has strung together the Tamil verses so that the three crowned monarchs may regard the god of Mūkīccara as their lord of prosperity".[90] Within the *Padigam* itself he calls god 'Pūḻiyan' (Cēra), 'Tennavan' (Pāṇḍya) and 'Kōḻi-Man' (Cōḷa) (256.5).

We cannot be certain who actually built the temple itself, but the natural inference is that being at Uṟaiyūr, it was the work of a Cōḷa. This seems also to be vaguely hinted in the sixth stanza:

செம்பியனுக்கிய, எந்தைமூக்கீச்சரத்தடிகள்.

Being situated at Uṟaiyūr, it was quite easy of access for the three monarchs, and must have been visited by them all.

### iii. *Sambandar's personal history as seen from his songs.*

We may now pass on to examine the bits of information available in Sambandar's songs about his own personal history. According to the *Periya Purāṇam* several miracles have been attributed to this saint. The first is his vision of Śiva and Pārvati near the sacred tank in Brahmapuri (Shiyāḻi), his native place, when he was three years old. The story goes that he had accompanied his father to the tank and when the father went into the water for bathing, the child cried aloud,

[90] மல்லையார் மும்முடிமன்னர் மூக்கீச் சரத்தடிகளைச்
செல்வராக நினையும்படிச் சேர்த்திய செந்தமிழ்............ 256. 11,

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and then Śiva and Pārvati appeared. The latter gave him milk, in drinking which he drank the milk of divine knowledge. From that moment, he began to sing of God in various temples. The first song sung by him is the first *padigam* of the *Tēvāram*. If we examine the song itself, we notice that there is no evidence throwing light on the incident itself. But this incident is quite definitely alluded to by Sambandar himself in another place. The second stanza of *Padigam* 282 runs:[91] "when father got angry with me saying that the food of supreme knowledge offered to me in the gold cup was objectionable, He (Śiva) came to my rescue." As for his having gained real illumination, it is alluded to in *padigam* 1, stanza 11.[91a] Sambandar speaks of his song as "the Tamil spoken by Sambandan who, through keeping his mind fixed in the matchless path, knew this Supreme Person, the *muni* of the rare path, skilled in the Veda, who came to the noisy wide tank in Brahmapura of the great path." The full force of the original cannot be brought out in the translation. The word '*alar*' has got a special significance in Tamil. It is the word used, in Tamil erotics 'Ahapporuḷ', to denote the popular clamour expressive of disapproval when a lover's dalliance with his sweet-heart attracts public notice and he does not marry her. It is evident that Sambandar has used the word in that sense in stanza 11,

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[91] போதையார் பொற்கிண்ணத் தடிசில் பொல்லாதெனத்
தாதையார் முனிவுறத்தானெனை யாண்டவன்.

[91a] அருநெறிய மறைவல்ல முனியகன் பொய்கை யலர்மேய
பெருநெறிய பிரமாபுர மேவிய பெம்மானி வன்றன்னை
ஒருநெறிய மனம் வைத்துணர் ஞானசம்பந் தனுரைசெய்த
திருநெறிய தமிழ்வல்லவர் தொல்வினை தீர்தலெளிதாமே.

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because the whole of the *padigam* is written in what is called *ahatturai* with its full measure of love technique. That is why he says in stanza 3 that 'his bangles have got loose' வெள்வளை சோர &c. The superficial meaning, therefore, is that Sambandar, the sweet-heart, was wooed and won by Śiva near the tank; this fact became known, and got to be noised abroad in the town. The inner meaning is that he had a vision of God Śiva there. Thus, it is clear from the context (because of the use of the word '*alar*') that his vision of god got known to the people there. There is something more in the stanza which is worth noticing. Śiva is described in the first line as 'அருநெறிய மறைவல்லமுனி' which is capable of two interpretations, one of which is given in the translation above. The other is this: 'the *Muni* of the rare path who is capable of hiding himself' or, in other words 'the *Muni* who is not capable of being seen except very rarely'. If interpreted thus, the next part of the line, and the next line, yield this meaning:—'who showed himself openly in the broad road of Brahmapuri so as to be broadly known to people standing by the side of the wide tank'. Thus Sambandar says that the wonder was due to the fact that Śiva who generally hides himself came out so as to be seen by every one. The next line would mean that such a supreme person was understood by Sambandar because he concentrated his mind on only one object (or as is usually expressed in Sanskrit 'with *Ēkāgra-citta*'). The last line states that this path of keeping the mind riveted upon god is a beautiful path, and is expressed in his Tamil songs. People reading them will find it quite easy to cast off the accumulated effects of their deeds (*karmas*).

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Adopting this interpretation it becomes possible to believe in the legend that Sambandar saw Śiva near the tank at Brahmapuri. Yet, we can say nothing about how old he was at the time when he got this divine vision. It is, however, a matter of comparatively minor importance. The Hindu mind that is steeped in Purāṇic lore finds no difficulty in accepting the story as true. There are thousands of such accounts about people having received spiritual illumination in their infancy, and the believer takes these as a matter of course.

The next miracle about him is his having received the gold cymbal from god Himself at Tirukkōlakkā. There is nothing in the *padigam* itself (No. 23) alluding to this incident; but the belief must have been very persistent for we notice that the name of the goddess in the temple is 'Ōśai koḍutta Nāyaki' or 'the goddess who gave the cymbal'. This was, according to the *Periya Purāṇam* the second *padigam* sung by the saint. Further, Saint Sundaramūrti who sang a *padigam* about the god of the temple not more than a century and a half later, definitely alludes to the miracle. He says:[92] "the god who shows his mercy to those who sing of Him, who gave the cymbal openly, so that the world might know, to Gñāna Sambandar who spread Tamil by his sweet music." So, if the incident did not actually happen, Saint Sundaramūrti must also have been one of the very many of his time who believed that it did.

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[92] நாளு மின்னிசையாற்றமிழ் பரப்பு ஞானசம்பந்தனுக் குலகவர்முன் றாள மீந்தவன் பாடலுக்கிரங்குந் தன்மையானை.

Sundarar *Padigam*, 62. 8.

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Another miracle about Sambandar appearing in the Periya Purāṇam is that god Śiva residing at Aratturai appeared before him in a dream and asked him to accept a pearl palanquin, &c. offered him by the god Himself.[93] Sambandar does not distinctly allude to it in his *padigam* No. 226, but in every one of the stanzas he praises god for His mercy. Each stanza ends with '*Aratturai, adigal tam aruḷe*' or 'the grace of the god of Aratturai'. But if we examine the *padigam* written about the same place by Appar, who, it is well known, was a contemporary of Sambandar, we find that he alludes to it, though not very explicitly. He says, rather abruptly in Stanza 9: "The god who manifested Himself in a dream to the man of *Kāḻi* i.e. to Sambandar."[94] If Appar is to speak of Sambandar's dream-vision of the God of Aratturai, it should surely relate to this incident. So, the circumstantial, though not scientifically conclusive, evidence is in favour of accepting the miracle as having happened.

According to the *Periya Purāṇam,* Sambandar is also credited with having cured, through God's grace, the disease of a princess (of the Maḻava country) at Tiruppāccil-āccirāmam.[95] This incident is alluded to

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[93] அள்ளனீர் வயல்சூழு மரத்துறை
வள்ளலார் நாமகிழ்ந் தளிக்கும்மவை
கொள்ளலாகுங் கொண்டெய்த்தல் செய்வாயென
வுள்ள வாரருள் செய்யவுணர்ந்தபின்.
P. P. Sambandar purāṇam, St. 206.

[94] காழியானைக் கனவிடையூரு மெய்
வாழியானை.......... Appar, 117. 9.

[95] Sam. Purāṇam, St. 318. ff,



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by Sambandar himself in a *padigam*,[96] in every one of the ten stanzas. The last line in every stanza is a question "Is it right for Him to cause trouble to this damsel?"

In the *Tēvāram* itself we do not have any clue to discover whether Śiva actually gave the saint a pearl palanquin to ward off the heat of the sun when he was going to Tiruppaṭṭīśvaran temple.[97] On the other hand, there seems to be some ground for believing the *Periya Purāṇam* account that Sambandar got money from God at Tiruvāvaḍuturai to be given to his father. In the padigam relating to it, Sambandar asks in every stanza "Is this the manner of your looking after my interests? If you do not give me any thing, is that your grace"?[98] Thus, believing the tradition, we may hold that the popular view at that time was that Sambandar got the money that he asked for. Though Sambandar does not allude to the incident definitely, we notice that Appar specifically mentions it. He says, "The Lord of Āvaḍuturai gave 1000 beautiful gold coins to the native of Kaḻumalam (i.e. Sambandar")."[99]

Quite similar is the account of the miracle of reviving, at Tirumarugal, one who had been bitten by a

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96 மங்கையை வாட மயல் செய்வதோ விவர்மாண்பே

Padigam, No. 44.

97 P. P. Sambandar, St. 396.

98 இதுவோ வெமையாளு மாறீவதொன் றெமக்கில்லையேல்
அதுவோ வுனதின்னருளாவடு துறையரனே. 262.

P. P. Sambandar, St. 425.

99 ... ........ கழுமலவூரர்க் கம்பொன்
ஆயிரங்கொடுப்பர் போலும். Appar 56. 1.

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snake. The wife was bemoaning the death of her husband when Sambandar came. He sang the *padigam* alluding to the distress of the woman in every one of the ten stanzas and as soon as the *padigam* was finished, the man came to life.[100] In the 1st stanza, Sambandar asks god "Is it right that the woman should be thus stricken with grief?" (தகுமோவிவளுண் மெலிவே 154·1). He asks the following in the succeeding stanzas. "Is it right that she should thus lose beauty? Why did you deprive her of her prosperity? Why did you make her lean? Why did you make her lose the lustre of her eyes?"[101] Another miracle mentioned about him is his having obtained one measure of gold coins every day from the god at Tiruvīḻimiḻalai (where there was famine) with which he purchased provisions &c. to feed all Śiva *Bhaktas*. The story goes that Appar had also obtained the same favour from god. But there was a difference. While Appar got coins which were accepted by provision merchants without any trouble, Sambandar's coins had to be exchanged for pure coins before provisions could be purchased. Knowing this, Sambandar sang a *padigam* asking god to give him also coins similar to those given to Appar. The request was granted.[102] The allusion to the incident is in the 1st stanza of

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[100] P. P. Sambandar Pur: 481.

[101] 'தகுமோ விவளே சறவே'
'எழில் வவ்வினையே'
'மெலிநீர்மை யளாக்கவும் வேண்டினையே'
'அணிநீல வொண்கண்ணயர் வாக்கினையே'

[102] P.P Samb. 565 to 570.
வாசிதீரவே காசு நல்குவீர்
மாசின் மிழலையீர் ஏசலில்லையே.

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padigam 92. This incident is also useful in evidence of the fact that, in the Tamil country, there were two kinds of coins prevalent, one sort which was accepted at its face value, and the other at its metal value after it was tested by the people who knew how to do it.

The legend about Maṟaikkāḍ that the door of the temple, which had opened when Appar had sung a *padigam,* closed of its own accord when Sambandar sang padigam 173[102a] is referred to in the opening stanza.

But the chief miracles are those relating to the Jains at Madura. Let us notice the main points in the Periya Purāṇam account about Sambandar's work in Madura. First of all the minister Kulacciṟai goes to Sambandar who was staying outside Madura, and invites him into the city.[103] On approaching the city, Sambandar sang a padigam in praise of the queen and the minister.[104] This *padigam* bears witness to the fact that Kulacciṟai was a Śiva *Bhakta* who used to respect Śiva *Bhaktas,* whether they came singly or in groups.[105] Thus it is clear that the king was not a bigot whatever his religious views might have been. Another point to be noticed is that the King was not a Jain as

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102a இது நன்கிறை வைத்தருள் செய்கவெனக்குன்
கத வந்திருக்காப்புக்கொள்ளுங் கருத்தாலே. 173. 1.

103 P. P. Samb. 646—662.

104 Padigam 379.

105 கணங்களாய் வரினுந் தமியராய்வரினு மடியவர் தங்களைக் கண்டால்
குணங்கொடு பணியுங்குலச் சிறைகுலாவுங் கோபுரஞ் சூழ்மணிக்
கோயில். 379. 4.

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is represented by the *Periya Purāṇam;* for he is described in the *padigam* as wearing the sacred ashes. The line runs thus:—'Kulacciṟai, the minister of the *king* wearing the sacred ashes.'[106] It is just possible to interpret this line in such a way that the description 'wearing sacred ashes' applies to the minister. But that appears to be rather unnatural judging from the context. The king could not have been a bigot because the queen herself was a Śaiva, as is seen from the Periya Purāṇam account and this *padigam*. The 5th stanza describes her as worshipping Śiva every day.[107] There can be no doubt that the worship was daily taking place in the temple; the queen was also possibly going to the temple every day. Thus the controversy between the Jains and Sambandar which took place later on, need not be taken as evidence of the king being a Jain. He might have looked upon Hindus and Jains with equal respect.

The next thing done by Sambandar was to go to the temple and praise god there. In this *padigam* Sambandar describes Śiva as the 'Warrior who vanquished the Jains'.[108] Then Sambandar is seen by Maṅgayarkkaraśi, the queen.[109] The minister entertained the saint in a *Maṭha* set apart for him.[110] It was

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106 வெள்ளை நீறணியும்
கொற்றவன் றனக்கு மந்திரியாய குலச்சிறை 379. 2.

107 ......நாடொறும் பணிந்தினி தேத்த
வெய்யவேற் சூலம் பாசமங்குசமான் விரிகதிர் மழுவுடன்றரித்த
ஐயனுருமை யோடின் புறுகின்றவாலவாய்...... 379. 5.

108 தேரமண் செற்றவீர னென்பரே. 94. 10.

109 P. P. Samb. 672.

110 Ibid, St. 676.

then that the Jains set fire to camp of Sambandar.[111] The saint then sang a *padigam* as a result of which the fire in the camp died out and the Pāṇḍya was attacked with fever. The padigam bears full evidence to the incident since the curse is contained in every one of the stanzas.[112] One point is worth noticing in this *padigam*. Sambandar gives the Pāṇḍya king different titles such as Pañcavan, Pārthivan, etc. But two expressions are specially significant: e.g. '*Paṇṇiyal Tamiḻ Pāṇḍyan*' or 'the Pāṇḍya skilled in Tamil music' and '*Pāvinān, Tennan Pāṇḍyan*'[112a] or 'the Pāṇḍya, expert in poetry'. From this, it is clear that the king was either himself a great poet, or was a great patron of poets. This point becomes specially valuable when we attempt to identify the Pāṇḍya king who is greatly praised in the *Kōvai* given in illustration of the Iṟaiyanār Agapporuḷ. It is just possible that the two kings were the same. We shall revert to this topic when we notice the date of Māṇikkavāśagar, Sundaramūrti and others later.

As a result of the *padigam*, the king began to suffer seriously and doctors were not able to cure him.[113] The Jains offered to remove the fever, but they failed. Then the king consented to be treated by Sambandar, who therefore started towards the palace. On his way, he went round the Śiva temple where he sang a *padigam*,

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[111] Ibid. 701.

[112] பொய்யராமமணர் கொளுவுஞ்சுடர்
பையவே சென்று பாண்டியற்காகவே. Pad. 309.

[112a] Ibid. St. 9.

[113] P.P. Samb. 715.

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requesting god's grace to win a victory over the Jains. The request is very plainly couched in each one of the stanzas.[114] According to the Periya Purāṇam, Sambandar got Śiva's permission,[115] and then he sang another *padigam*. In all the stanzas of this poem (No. 367), Sambandar offers a prayer that "Śiva's praise alone should triumph in the world".[115a] In these stanzas also there is a repetition of the request to god for capacity to defeat the Jains in controversy. Afterwards the saint went round the *māḍa* streets of the city[116] and finally approached the presence of the king.[117] The king asked the saint which was his native place,[118] and then he sang *padigam* No. 209. The king then asked both the Jains and Sambandar to demonstrate the superiority of their respective religions.[119] It was at that time that Sambandar sang the *padigam* wherein he told the queen that he was not afraid of the Jains as long as the Lord of Madura (i.e. Śiva) was on his side.[120] In the *padigam* he states that 'he was not inferior in strength to the Jains who had settled themselves in *Ānaimalai and other places'*.[121] Thus it is clear that the Jains were having Ānaimalai as their head-quarters. The opening stanza shows that the

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[114]Padigam 305.

[115]P.P . Samb. 741.

[115a] (ஞாலநின்புகழே மிகவேண்டும்).

[116]St. 745.

[117]St. 752.

[118]St. 753.

[119]St. 759.

[120]Padigam No. 297.

[121]. ஆனைமாமலை யாதியாய விடங்களிற் பலவல்லல்சேர்
ஈனர்கட் கெளியேனலேன்,...... 297.1.

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poem was sung in the presence of the queen for she is addressed directly.[122] The last stanza states that the song was sung before the king.[123] Thus the *Periya Purāṇam* account is verified. The poem is also clear evidence of the fearlessness of the saint. He states in the 4th stanza that 'the Jains were ignorant people who moved about like monkeys without understanding the value of the Sanskrit or Tamil scriptures.'[124] After singing this song, he began his cure by singing another *padigam* in praise of the sacred ashes. The fact of the king's cure is directly alluded to in the last stanza. He says:—"These stanzas were sung to remove the burning disease of the Pāṇḍya."[125] Thus there is proof that the miracle took place.

The next miracle relates to the fire test. It was decided that both Sambandar and the Jains were to put their writing into the fire, and that if Sambandar's religion was the better one, the palm leaf which he put into the fire should not to be burnt.[126] The saint came out successful in the test. Each stanza of this poem states directly: 'there is no danger to them if these are thrown into the fire'.[127] The last stanza also says

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[122] மானினேர் விழிமாதராய் வழுதிக்குமா பெருந்தேவிகேள். 297. 1.

[123] ..................திளங்கும் முடித்தென்னன் முன்னிவை. 297. 11.

[124] மந்திபோற்றிரிந் தாரியத்தொடு செந்தமிழ்ப்பயனறிகிலா
அந்தகர்............ 297. 3.

[125] ..................தென்னனுடலுற்ற தீப்பிணியாயின தீரச்
சாற்றிய பாடல்கள் பத்தும்.......... 202. 11.

[126] P. P., St. 784.

[127] மிளிரிளவளரெரி யிடிலிவை பழுதிலை மெய்ம்மையே 345. 1.
இட்டுறு மெரியினிலிடிலிவை பழுதிலை மெய்ம்மையே 345, 2.

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that the poem was sung in the presence of the king.[128] Afterwards, another test was tried. Sambandar wrote one of his poems and threw it into the Vaigai. It floated against the current. This was *padigam* No. 312. In stanza 11 the poet alludes to the fact of the palm leaf running against the current. The line says "the leaf ran beautifully against the current without sinking in the clear water".[129] As Sambandar says in the same stanza this was proof of god's love. He says "if we think of it, is it not seen that the God who raises the standard of the bull is God indeed?"[130] But there is more in the stanza. The first line alludes to the establishment of the Śangam in Madura. Literally, the meaning of the stanza as a whole is as follows:—" If he who made the faultless collection of literature in cool (or shady) Madura could see very clearly the grace (of God) that made the palm leaf go against the current without sinking in the clear water and reach the bank where stood the Jains who had no clear notion about God, does it not show that the god of the bull-ensign is God indeed?"[131] The same meaning is indicated by Śēkkiḻār who wrote his poetic commentary on this

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[128] கொற்றவ னெதிரிடை யெரியினி லிடவிவை கூறிய. 345. 11.

[129] ..................................ஓலைதெண்ணீர்ப்
பற்றின்றி பாங்கெதிர் வினூவும். 312. 11.

[130] ..................................ஊரவும் பண்புநோக்கில்
பெற்றொன் றுயர்த்த பெருமான் பெருமானுமன்றே. 312. 11.

[131] அற்றன்றி யந்தண் மதுரைத் தொகையாக்கினானும்
தெற்றென்று தெய்வந்தெளியார் கரைக்கோலை தெண்ணீர்ப்
பற்றின்றிப் பாங்கெதிர் வினூவும் பண்புநோக்கில்
பெற்றொன் றுயர்த்த பெருமான் பெருமானுமன்றே. *ibid.*



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particular verse in the *Periya Purāṇam*.[132] We also notice from the same stanza of Śēkkiḻār that he believed that the Jains were not convinced by the arguments of the king, and that the leaf was thrown into the river for demonstrating to them the truth about Śiva's powers. That means that the king had already become convinced. It is clearly seen from both Sambandar's padigam and the *Periya Purāṇam* account that this Pāṇḍya king had established a Śangam at Madura. This last point is of very great importance to us for settling the identity of the Pāṇḍya, Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār, who was cured by Sambandar. He was, we have proof now, one who established a Tamil Śangam. We have seen before that Sambandar speaks in another place about the king's patronage of Tamil. That reference appears in a song sung by Sambandar before he entered into Madura. Thus, it is seen that the Śangam had been established before the miraculous cure. Later on, we shall examine this point in greater detail for coming to the conclusion that this monarch was none other than the king about whom the Iṟaiayanār Ahapporuḷ Kōvai has several allusions.

From *padigam* No. 290, we find that the leaf on which Sambandar's poem was written reached the place known on that account as Tiruvēḍagam. The fact itself is alluded in the last stanza which says;—"The matchless god of Ēḍakam where the waters of the Vaigai

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132 ஆனவற்றன்றி யென்றவத்திப் பாட்டிற்கூடன்
மாநகரத்துச் சங்கம் வைத்தவன் தேற்றத்தேறு
வீனர்களெல்லைக் கிட்ட வேடு நீரெதிர்ந்து செல்லில்
ஞானமீசன் பாலன் பேயென்றனர் ஞானமுண்டார், pp. 843.

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brought the manuscript leaf".[133] The victory having been thus effected, Sambandar went with the king and queen to the temple at Madura and praised the god there.[134] It was then that he sang *padigam* No. 310. The poem itself bears no mark of its having been sung on that occasion.

As for the other miracles, that at Tirukkoḷḷampūdūr relates to Sambandar and his party going in a small boat crossing the river which was in high floods. According to the Periya Purāṇam account, the boatman had abandoned the idea of crossing it and had left the bank leaving the boats fastened somewhere. But Sambandar took the boat and using his song as the oar, went over to the other side.[135] The *padigam* alludes in every stanza to the crossing, and also to the grace received but does not specifically mention the flood.[136] It is quite likely that the grace referred to was the ability to cross the river at such a dangerous moment.

*Periya Purāṇam* stanza 980 speaks of how Sambandar converted male palmyras into female palmyras in Tiruvōttūr. In his *padigam* sung in that place he alludes to the incident in stanza 11.[137] The next story is about his bringing back to life a damsel

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[133] .......... ..வைகைநீர்
ஏடுசென்றணை தருமேடகத் தொருவனை. 290. 11.

[134] Periya Purāṇam 865.

[135] Samb. P. P. 898.

[136] செல்லவுந்துக சிந்தையார் தொழ
நல்லமாறருணம்பனே. 264.

[137] குரும்பை யாண்பனை யீன்குலை யோத்தூர். 54. 11

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who had died at Mylapore. Though in Sambandar's song about Mylapore,[138] he does not definitely state the thing as it happened, he says in every stanza "Are you going away, fair damsel without seeing the festival?". He narrates in detail the various festivals conducted in Mylapore without seeing which the 'fair damsel' leaves the world. This may be taken as evidence in proof of the event.

The last detail about Sambandar's life was itself a miracle. It happened, according to the *Periya Purāṇam,* at a place called Nallūr-Perumaṇam. Sambandar went along with his chosen bride into the temple and as he approached the god, he and his following got merged in the Jyōtis or brilliance of the deity.[139] It is impossible that his final disappearance should be evidenced in his own song; but examining it, we find that he makes a request to that effect in stanza 8 of the padigam[140] sung within that temple. He says:— "O God!, who is seated in Nallūr-Perumaṇam. Bless us (me and my followers) with death". The word used to denote death or liberation from earthly existence is '*pōkku*'. It is well known that '*pōkku*' means in Tamil 'death' as opposed to '*varavu*', which means 'birth'. So, if Sambandar's last wish was granted (as every other wish was granted to him by god), it ought to have

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138 ............,காணுதே போதியோ பூம்பாவாய். Pad. 183.

139 St. 1253.

140 நல்லூர்ப் பெருமணம்
புக்கிருந்தீரெமைப் போக்கருளீரே. 384. 8.

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been death. The tradition seems therefore justified. Since Sambandar asks for death, 'for us' that is, for him and his followers, it is likely that all who were with him also departed along with him. That is in fact the tradition. Likewise, stanza 10 of the *padigam* is also significant in this connection. He says:—"O, You who get disturbed by the foolish teachings of Jains and Buddhists, come. By worshipping the feet of the Lord of Nallūr-Perumaṇam, we can easily obtain *Mōkṣa.*"[141] It is true that taken by itself this stanza is not very different from the several other stanzas sung by him about the manner of gaining liberation or *mōkṣa.* But judged from the context, it seems to have some special significance.

Now that we have noticed the chief miracles attributed to him and the possibility of some of them having been true, the question arises as to how far a historian is to accept them as historical facts. It is certain that Sambandar alludes definitely to some of them. It is not fair to conclude straightaway that they are deliberate falsehoods. At best one can only say that the saint himself was deluded into the belief that these things actually happened. When he believed in them, it was natural that his followers and admirers believed in them also. All that the historian can do in such cases is to keep an open mind. It is not incumbent upon him to take these things as having actually happened for the sole reason

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[141] ஆதரமணொடு சாக்கியர் தாஞ்சொல்லும்
பேதமை சேட்டெப்பிணக் குறவீர் வம்மின்
நாதனை நல்லூர்ப் பெருமண மேவிய
வேதனைத்தாடொழ வீடெளிதாமே Nn. 384. 10.

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that these pious people said that they happened. His duty is to take cognisance of two classes of facts—explicable facts and inexplicable facts. We see both in life even at the present day. Some things do happen and they defy all attempts at rational explanation. The historian cannot, and ought not, to shut them out. He has to record them and give them their proper place. He must keep them open for investigation till he can definitely demonstrate that such things could not have happened. Before such an examination is made it is as unfair to disbelieve in them as it is to believe in them. That is one aspect of the question. Another relates to the influence that belief in miracles (such as these) has upon the country. That line of enquiry is legitimately the province of the historian since he is dealing with the actions of the people whose thoughts and acts have been influenced by beliefs in supernatural happenings. We shall discover later how the popular imagination was stirred by the life of Sambandar and others, and how Jainism was practically wiped out of the Tamil country for a period of nearly three centuries and a half. It need not be taken up just now since it relates also to the work of the other Tēvāram hymners and Māṇikka-vāśagar.

It is enough if we note just now the significant fact that the victory won by Sambandar was not through argument or disputation, but only by his holy example. From the details about his life, we notice that there is a very great contrast between him and the *Ācāryas* like Śankara and others. He did not write commentaries on the sacred texts, or deliver any discourses. All that he

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did was to worship the gods in the temples and sing songs in praise of Śiva, most of which contain nothing more than a description of the braided hair, sacred ashes, the serpent, the crescent, etc. of the god, and a repetition (perhaps *ad nauseum*) of the self-same stories of the Śiva Purāṇa, etc., such as the appearance of the Viśvarūpa Liṅga of Śiva, the defeat of the three giants holding sway over the three great cities, the curbing of the pride of Rāvaṇa, etc. The critical reader often feels the repetitions of these Purāṇic details to be sufficiently wearisome, and since they do not convey any new meaning, many of the songs have to be read with impatience; and the only pleasure gained in doing so is the beautiful rhythm and the exquisite music of the words. Thus it is clear that the conquest accomplished by him was not an intellectual conquest at all. It is clear that he must have had a very attractive personality, and that the very sight of him must have inspired love and respect. But these could not prevail with all. Men of cold intellectual reasoning would surely be proof against all sentimental persuasions. If they were to be conquered, it could be done only by doing things which would baffle their intellect. If they saw miracles happening, in other words, if ever they found that their intellect and reasoning could not help them in explaining things which they actually saw, they were bound to lose faith in their own intellect and begin to have faith in something which was beyond reasoning. Arguing this way, we may conclude that Sambandar's life and conduct alone enabled him to put an end to the danger

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of Jainism which was unsettling the beliefs of many Hindus as seen from the *Tēvāram* poems themselves.

### iv. *The nature of Sambandar's Śaivism.*

We may now pass on to examine the nature of Sambandar's Śaivism. Though most of his songs relate the stories of Śiva and mention comparatively unimportant particulars, we have evidence in several places of the poet's deep knowledge of the fundamental teachings of Śaiva philosophy. As noticed elsewhere, Śiva had, according to the Śaiva, two forms. The higher form is that of the ultimate Being from whom Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and everything else originate. The lower form is that of the functionary Rudra or Śiva who helps *Jīvas* or embodied souls by liberating them from their bondage and taking them on towards final liberation or *Mōkṣa*. Whenever Sambandar deals with the *Purāṇic* details, he has the lower *Śiva* in his mind; but in many of his songs he describes the higher aspect of Śiva in such a way that it may be intelligible to every one. In the *padigam* sung in Tiruvīḻimiḻalai,[142] the second stanza runs thus:—"Vīḻimiḻalai is the seat of Him who is the end and the beginning; who is one, who becomes both male and female; who becomes the three guṇas, who becomes the four Vedas, the five elements, the six tastes, the seven notes, the eight directions and who is (in becoming all these) different". Here the Saint's object is to express the unity of God hidden in the

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[142] ஈறாய் முதலொன்றாயிரு பெண்ணாண் குணமூன்றாய்
மாறா மறை நான்காய் வருபூதமவையைந்தாய்
ஆறார் சுவையே ழோசையொ டெட்டுத் திசைதானாய்
வேறாயு டனானிடம் வீழிம் மிழலையே. No, 11,

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multiplicity of the universe. The central idea of the poem is, if concisely expressed in his own words, 'the one became suddenly many different forms'. This view is what is expressed in the conception of Tirumūlar's Aṇḍa Liṅgam. That again is what is called in common language *Viśvarūpam* or the God's form of the universe. Sambandar says the same thing more briefly in *padigam* No. 13, St. 2:—"The one became many".[143] In the *padigam* on Tiruccivapuram, he clearly represents the higher Śiva in his manifestations of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva or Rudra. Rendered into English, the first stanza runs thus:—"Well established in the world are they who think of Śiva who seated himself (as Brahmā) in the lotus with the intention of giving existence to the *Jīvas* (i.e., *Jīvātmas*) manifesting themselves as *Ākāśa*, wind, fire, water, earth, *Śāstra*, commentary, Veda, three guṇas, the paths, celestials, and others."[144] The second stanza may be translated thus;—"Blessed by the goddess of prosperity will be those who think of Śiva whose form is that of *Hari* (Viṣṇu) who wakefully sleeps in the ocean of high waves, and who is mindful about sustaining men who live in this world of many mountains, and also the celestials and others who live in

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[143] ஏருர் தருமொருவன் பலவுருவன்.
ஒருருவன் பலவுருவன்னிலையானான். 13. 2.

[144] புவம்வளி கனல்புனல் புவிகலை யுரைமறை திரிகுணமமர் நெறி
திவமலிதரு சுரர்முதலியர் திகழ்தருமுயி ரவையவைதம
பவமலி தொழிலது நினைவொடு பதுமநன் மலரது மருவிய
சிவனது சிவபுரநினைபவர் செழுநிலனினிலை பெறுவரே.
No. 21. 1,



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other worlds''.[145] The succeeding stanza speaks of Śiva (in his lower aspect). It says :—"Renowned will be those who worship Śiva who assumed the first form with the intention of totally destroying (the bodies of) all *Jīvas* appearing as celestials and human beings, etc., in different worlds beginning with this world surrounded by the faultless ocean''.[146]

These stanzas evidence Sambandar's view that Śiva (or Brahman) manifests himself in the three highest forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra for the purpose of creating, preserving and destroying the universe in which *Jīvas* have to play their part. It is also seen that the bondage of the universe is cut asunder by *Śivam* manifesting Himself as the lower Śiva. This lower Śiva is higher, according to Sambandar, than Viṣṇu or Brahmā. That is why he calls it '*Mudal-uru*' or the 'first form'. This also implies that beyond this is the formless *Śivam* or Higher Śiva which is called by the Śaiva Siddhāntin the 'formless' (*Aruvam*). When Śiva (lower) is himself a form, Sambandar could not help regarding the Viṣṇu and Brahmā as forms or *Uruvas* (Rūpas). It is well known that the formless

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[145] மலைபல வளர்தரு புவியிடை மறைதரு வழிமலி மனிதர்கள்
நிலைமலி சுரர்முதலுலகு கணிலைபெறுவகை நினைவொடுமிகும்
அலைகடனடு வறிதுயிலமரரி யுருவியல் பரனுறைபதி
சிலைமலிமதிள் சிவபுரநினைபவர்திரு மகளொடு திகழ்வரே.

No. 21. 2.

[146] பழுதிலகடல் புடைதழுவிப படிமுதலிய வுலகுகண்மலி
குழுவிய சுரர்பிறர் மனிதர்கள்குல மலிதருமுயிரவையவை
முழுவது மழிவகை நினைவொடுமுதலுரு வியல்பரனுறைபதி
செழுமணியணி சிவபுரநகர் தொழுமவர் புகழ்மிகுமுலகிலே.

No. 21. 3.

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cannot be seen by the form, however high the form itself may be. That is why Sambandar, like the others, incessantly says that neither Brahmā nor Viṣṇu can see Śiva, the formless. In fact the Vaiṣṇava has the very same conception of the higher and the lower Viṣṇu. The higher Viṣṇu is formless and is superior to Brahmā and Rudra. The difference between the Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva, therefore, in these matters is only one of nomenclature. Sambandar uses the term *Arūpam* in his songs, e.g. he says "The form will rise high when the two praise the formless one of Madura".[147] The 'two' are Brahmā and Viṣṇu and the allusion there is to the Purāṇic story of Śiva being transformed into a pillar of fire neither the bottom nor the top of which could be seen. This fire itself is, as seen from the stanza, one of the forms of Śiva. It is elsewhere called '*Jyōti*' or brilliance; e.g., in one place Śiva is addressed as 'the original *Jyōtis* which could not be known by Brahmā and Viṣṇu'.[148] The Vaiṣṇava describes Viṣṇu as the *Ādi* because he conceives of Viṣṇu as the *Paramātma* who is the '*Ādi*' or 'source' of all *Jīvas*. The *Jīvas* are all forms; but their form is much more subtle than the forms of the universe because they stand beyond the five *Bhūtas* or elements which constitute the material out of which the universe is made. That is why even Śiva (lower), Viṣṇu and Brahmā are said to be *Rūpas* or forms. Their *Rūpa* is entirely different from the *Rūpas* or forms of the universe, but still

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[147] அருவனாலவாய் மருவி னான்றனை
இருவரேத்த நின் றுருவ மோங்குமே. 19. 9.

[148] ஆதியாய நான்முகனு மாலுமறிவரிய
சோதியானே. 50. 9.

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they are Rūpas and have to be destroyed. The agent who effects this destruction is, according to the Śaiva, Śiva or Rudra, and that is why he is held superior to Brahmā and Viṣṇu. But it is to be remembered that this Śiva has also to be ultimately destroyed and that happens when the form of Śiva gets merged in the formless *Śivam* or *Paramātman*. This conception is expressed in different ways by the *Tēvāram* hymners. Sambandar says in one place "You became the end of *Jyōtis; you are the Jyōtis* inside the *Jyōtis*".[149] The idea is that *Jyōtis* or the form of (the lower) Śiva comes from the formless *Śiva* (*Paramātman*), and has finally to go back to it. Hence *Paramātman* is both the beginning and the end. The *Jyōtis* inside the *Jyōtis* is the formless *Paramātman* lying concealed in the form of Śiva. Elsewhere Sambandar says "You are the end, the beginning and this entire universe".[150] Here we have the identification of the universe also with *Śivam* or *Paramātman*. That is because it is the universe that stands between the beginning and the end; and if *Paramātman* is the source, he cannot help being the middle (or the universe) and also the end.

Sambandar gives expression to Śiva being the 'middle' as well as the beginning:—"Of the three (you are) the *Mūrti* who is the beginning and the middle".[151] The significance of this way of identifying the *Paramātma* with the beginning, middle and end can be easily seen if we notice the manner in which *Paramātma*

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[149] சோதி யந்தமாயினுஞ் சோதியுள்ளொர் சோதியாய். 310. 7.

[150] முடிவுமாய் முதலாயிவ் வைய முழுதுமாய். 296. 3,

[151] மூவரிலும் முதலாய் நடுவாய மூர்த்தியை. 44. 8.

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is described in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. There the preceptor states "That, verily, whence beings here are born, that by which when born they live, that within which on deceasing they enter—that be desirous of understanding. That is Brahma".[152] Here is stated in a nutshell the nature of Brahman. It is the beginning or the creator, the middle or the support, and the final release or end. So far as the Universe is concerned, these three functions are delegated to the *Trimūrtis,* Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. These are therefore *Īśvaras.* They must also be born, be sustained and gain final release. They are born in Brahmam, are supported by it and are released by it. That is the Śaiva as well as the Vaiṣṇava conception. But the votaries of Śiva and Viṣṇu apply the name Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively to the *Brahman* of the Upaniṣads. When that is done, the middle or the condition in which Brahman's activity is kept alive is the universe of name and form. The universe itself is to be conceived of as two-fold. The lower one is that in which *Jīvas* play their part. The higher one is that in which disembodied *Jīvas* (including *Īśvaras*) function. This universe is expressed in the Upaniṣads by the mystic syllable Ōm, as in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad which opens with the verse "Ōm!, This syllable is this whole world".

Thus we see that Sambandar is merely re-stating the Upaniṣadic doctrines when he says Śiva is the beginning, middle and end. In fact, the very name Śivam is used in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad in describing the *Ātman* who is superior to *Sarvēśvara* (which term

[152] Tait., Valli. 3, Anuvāka 1.

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can be fittingly applied to Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra). The Upaniṣad runs thus:—"Not inwardly cognitive, not outwardly cognitive, not bothwise cognitive, not a cognition-mass, not cognitive, not non-cognitive, unseen, with which there can be no dealing, ungraspable, having no distinctive mark, non-thinkable, that cannot be designated, the essence of the assurance of which is the state of being one with the self, the cessation of development (*Prapañcōpaśamam*), tranquil (*Śāntam*), benign (*Śivam*) without a second (*Advaitam*)—(such) they think is the fourth (*Caturtham*). He is the self (*Ātman*). He should be discerned".[153] It is this word *Śivam* as applied to the *Ātman* that has been taken up by the Śaiva to indicate the highest.

Likewise, there are several other ideas appearing in Sambandar's songs which find equal expression in the Sanskrit scriptures. For example, in one place Sambandar says: "Tell me, O God, why are you the guiding spirit of all worshippers whatever their mode of worship?"[154] Almost the same thing is said in the Gītā by Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa:—"I appear before every one in the form in which I am worshipped O, Pārtha, men always follow my path alone".[155] Appar is equally tolerant. He says 'Though men of undeveloped understanding make a new religion and talk angry words, those words also will fit our god'.[156]

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[153] Māṇḍ. 7.

[154] எத்தவத் தோர்க்கு மிலக்காய்நின்ற எம்பெருமானி துவென்கொல் சொல்லாய். 4. 10.

[155] Gita IV, II.

[156] விரிவிலா வறிவினர்கள் வேறொரு சமயஞ்செய்து எரிவினாற் சொன்னாரேனு மெம்பிராற் சேற்றதாகும். Ap. 60. 9.

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The *Māyā* doctrine is also alluded to in one line where he says "Death and Life are just appearances".[157] There are two ways in which the *Māyā* doctrine is accepted. One is to regard it from the truly *advaitic* point of view, and declare that *Māyā* is non-existent. The other is to regard it as the highest manifestation of *Paramātman's Śakti*. Sambandar took the second view, and that is seen in the line where he says "He (Śiva) is the other half of Her who is the first of all *Śaktis*."[158]

The Śaiva doctrine of *Mala* or impurity is referred to here and there; e.g. the saint says "He will remove *Mala* of the men of austerity".[159] The idea here is that he appears as *Śivaguru* (dealt with by Tirumūlar, as seen above) and removes the three *malas* of *Āṇava, Karma* and *Māyā*.

Sambandar was not ignorant of the *Sāṅkhya Tatvas* taken up and elaborated by the Śaivas. He refers to the 'four *Antaḥ Karaṇas*' or inner senses[160] and in different places to the five elements, *Indriyas*, etc. He knew the *Yōga Mārga* by which the aspirant after *Mukti* controlled the two *Vāyus* (*Prāṇa* and *Apāna*), and got control over the *Iḍā* and *Pingaḷa Nāḍis*. In *padigam* 128 he says "You are praised by the denizens of the sky who have controlled the five senses, the four

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157 சாநாளும் வாழ்நாளுந் தோற்றமிவை. Samb. 59. 3.

158 சத்தி யுளாதியோர் தையல் பங்கன். 115. 4.

159 மலனாய தீர்த்தெய்து மாதவத் தோர்க்கே. 119. 6.

160 நாலந்தக் கரணமுமொரு நெறியாய். 126. 7.

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inner senses, the three *guṇas* and the two breaths; you have come to Brahmapuram which protects him (the Brahman) who fixes his mind on you, pays heed to the rules of the twice-born, performs the three *Sandhyas,* reads the four *Vedas,* performs the five sacrifices (*Pañca-Yagña*), studies the six *Vēdāngas* and repeats (or meditates upon) the single letter (or the *Praṇava*) and studies the *Purāṇas*".[161] From the quotation, it is clear that the saint is describing both the *Yōgic* path leading to Śiva, and the *Vedic* path leading to Him. In the first portion where he describes the *Yōgic* path, he uses the word '*Vānōr*', which ordinarily means 'celestials'; but it is clear from the context that it means here 'those who have transcended the limitations of the body by the practice of *Yōga,* and have become equal to the celestials'. If we do not interpret it thus, it would be difficult to explain the text. The celestials have no need to control their breath (இருவளியொருங்கியவானோர்) since they have no bodies with the *Nāḍis* and breaths running through them. Thus we notice that Sambandar is here referring only to the *Śiva Yōgis* who become possessed of the powers of the celestials such as moving in the air, etc.

[161] ஐம்புலனு லாமந்தக் கரணம்
முக்குணமிருவளி யொருங்கிய வானோர்
எத்தநின்றனை யொருங்கிய மனத்தோ
டிருபிறப்போர்ந்து முப்பொழுது குறைமுடித்து
நான்மறை யோதி யைவகை வேள்வி
அமைத்தாறங் கமுதலெழுத் தோதி
வரன்முறை பயின்றெழுவான்றனை வளர்க்கும்
பிரமபுரம் பேணினை................ 128. 17—24.

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It is also seen that Sambandar had absolutely no doubt about Śaivism being *Vedic* in character, for he speaks (in the quotation above) of the practice of the *Veda,* the *Brahma Yagña,* the *Praṇava,* etc., by the twice-born.

We find Sambandar also mentioning the Samayas or systems of philosophical doctrine as being six in number.[162] As for the number six, there are various interpretations. First there are the six schools of philosophy, Nyāya, Vaiśēṣika, Yōga, Sāṅkhya, Mīmāṁsā and Vēdānta. Then we have Śaivam, Vaiṣṇavam, Śāktam, Sauram, Gāṇāpatyam, Kaumāram. Again, we have Bauddham, Jainam, Bhairavam, Kāḷāmukham, Lokāyatam and Śūnya Vādam. We have other groups. We do not know which was in Sambandar's mind when he wrote the verse.

In another place Sambandar reveals his knowledge of the Śaiva conception of the five-fold function of Śiva i.e., *Sṛṣṭi* (Creation), *Sthiti* (Preservation), *Saṁhāram* (Destruction), *Tirōbhāvam* (Invisibility) and *Anugraham* (Grace). These he speaks as the five *Aruḷs,* or mercies of Śiva.[163] We have already seen how Tirumūlar has explained all this in his Tirumandiram. Similarly he knew of the conception of the *Cidākāśam,* or the open space within the heart.[164] In the *padigam* on Tirukkacci Ēkambam, he definitely states that the fire that rose from Brahmā and Viṣṇu (according to

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[162] ஒத்தாறு சமயங்கட்கொருதலைவன் 131. 1.

[163] அருடலஞ்சினர் 143. 3.

[164] தேனுமா யமுதாகி நின்றான்தெளி சிந்தையுள்
வானுமாய்................ 146. 6.



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the Purāṇic account) was the great *kambha* or the *Skambha* of the Atharva Vēda.[165] He says "Is not the lord of Ēkamba (of Kāñcī) the great pillar seen by the two gods?" From a study of the Atharva hymn, it will be seen that the description is that of Brahman as the great pillar, or *Skambha*.

The Saint also uses the ancient expressions *Parāpara* and *Param-para* used by Tirumūlar and others to denote the Śivaśakti form, that is, the half male, half female form. He says "He whose half is female is *Parāparai;* he is *Paramparar*".[166] About this same manifestation of Śiva's *Jyōtirūpa,* Sambandar mentions in another place that it was both existent and non-existent. The name he gives therefore to Śiva of this form is 'Uḷḷadu Anṟan' or 'He who is not'. The stanza runs thus.—"Viṣṇu said that he would see the bottom of 'Him who is not'. Brahmā said that he would see the top of 'Him who is not'. They did not see 'Him who is not' ".[167] Now, what is the meaning of the expression 'existent and non-existent': It means that this form of Śiva is his '*Sat-Asat*' form, in the language of the Śaiva Siddhāntin. *Sat* is Brahmam, or Śivam, and "*Asat*" is *Pāśa* or bondage. *Sat-Asat* is *Paramātma,* or the first manifes-

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165 ஏகம்பமேவியாடு மிறை யிருவர்க்கும்
மாகம்ப மறியும் வண்ணத் தவனல்லனே.. 148. 9.

166 ............ ..........பாவை
பாதியர் பராபரா பரம்பரரிருக்கை 169. 7.

167 உள்ளதன்றனைக் காண்பன் கீழென்றமா மணிவண்ணனும்
உள்ளதன்றனைக் காண்பன் மேலென்றமா மலரண்ணலும்
உள்ளதன்றனைக் கண்டிலார் 214.10.

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tation of the unmanifested *Para Brahman.* It is formless because it is all-formed. It has in it the form of everything, including the forms of such abstract (or apparently formless) things like time, *Niyati, Kalā, Rāga* etc., also of *Māyā, Āṇava* and *Mala.* Thus it is not capable of being seen in its entirety. Its middle can be seen, but not its beginning or end (i.e. the bottom or the top). In other words, people can realise its existence because the *Ātma* is seen by every one to be functioning in the universe. The philosophical truth embodied herein is beautifully expressed in the Gīta Verse,[168] "We do not see the beginning of these; they are clear in the middle; their end is indistinct. O, Bhārata! why should there be any sorrow about it?" In fact, it is for the purpose making his hearers remember this fundamental truth that Śiva is to be conceived of as the *Paramātma,* and not as a mere functionary appearing with the trident, the serpent etc., that Sambandar allots a stanza in every one of his *padigams* to the description of this form of Śiva. That was his manner of impressing upon his hearers the central doctrine of *Śaiva Śiddhānta.*

In *padigam* 230, Sambandar describes Śiva more or less in the manner in which the *Puruṣa* is described in the Puruṣa Sūkta hymn and also in the *Viśvarūpa* form of the Bhagavad-Gītā. He is spoken of as having a thousand eyes.[169] The *Puruṣa* is called *Sahasrākṣa.* He

[168] "Avyaktādīni bhūtāni vyakta madhyāni Bhārata, avyakta nidhanānyēva tatra kā paridēvanā" (II. 28).

[169] கண்ணாயிரமுடையார். 230. 2.

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is also spoken of as having a thousand hands.[170] Viṣṇu is described in the Gītā as *Sahasrabāhu.* Thus it is clear that all *Bhaktas* describe the highest manifestation of God in more or less the same terms. It does not matter whether they were Śaivas or Vaiṣṇavas. Their highest conception is the same.

Sambandar has some words here and there on the *Śaiva Mārga* as such. He says that the *Pañcākṣara* will show the *Śiva Mukti.*[171]

This term *Śiva-Mukti* has its own special significance to the Śaiva Siddhāntin, for it is one of the three *Muktis* stated by Tirumūlar in his section on three *Muktis* in the 8th *Tantra.* The stanza runs thus:—"The *Jīva-Mukti* is *Atītam; Para-Mukti* is *upaśāntam* where everything ceases; *Śiva-Mukti* is *Ānandam*".[172] If we examine the *Tirumandiram* stanza still further, we shall see that its object is to show how meditation on the letter *Ōm* gives *Paramukti* or *Upaśāntam.* It says: "These three *Muktis* are in the three *Turiyas; Upaśantam* comes by meditation on the *Ōm*".[173] As seen from this stanza itself *Śiva-Mukti* lies beyond *Para-Mukti* which is *Nādāntam.* How is it to be obtained? Tirumūlar mentions it elsewhere. Stanza 2711 runs thus:—" By concentrating the mind on the

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170 ஊகயுமொராயிரமுடையார் 230. 2.

171 செல்லல் கெடச் சிவமுத்திகாட்டுவ
...... .........அஞ்செழுத்துமே 280. 4.

172 சீவன்றன் முத்தியதீதம் பரமுத்தி
யோவுப சாந்தம் சிவமுத்தியானந்தம். 2474.

173 மூவயின் முச்சொரூபமுத்திமுப் பாலதா
யோவுறு தாரத்திலுள்ளு நாதாந்தமே. 2474.

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*mantram, Śivāya-namaḥ,* by making oneself its servant so as to get over all obstacles, if one constantly thinks of "*Śivāya, Śiva, Śiva*", the obstacles will vanish, and *Ānandam* will be gained".[174] Here he states that it is the *Pañcākṣaram* that gives *Ānanda*, that is, *Śiva-Mukti*. Sambandar also uses the expression *Śiva-Mukti* where he deals with the greatness of the *Pañcākṣara*. Both Tirumūlar and Sambandar agree in regarding this *Pañcākṣara* as the central teaching of the Vedas. The former says:—"None knows that the sacred five letters are awake and asleep in the ancient Vedas. They are fools who say that they know the letters. They do not know the letters that transcend all letters".[175] The *Pañcākṣara* is here said to be performing sleepless sleep, or *Yōga-nidrā* within the Vedas. The Vaiṣṇava conception is that Mahā Viṣṇu is performing *Yōga-nidrā* in the ocean of milk. So, the two conceptions are the same though expressed differently. Mahā Viṣṇu is *Ānanda* in one case. *Pañcākṣara* is *Ānanda* in the other case. So the eclectic can equate *Pañcākṣara* with *Viṣṇu*. Sambandar says something to the same effect. He says "The five letters are the final *Mantra* through which one must reach *Śiva* (the Vedic person) who rose up to the form of red fire, who became the four Vedas

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[174] சிவாய நமவெனச் சித்தமொருக்கி
யவாய மறவேயடிமை யதாக்கிச்
சிவாய சிவசிவவென்றே சிந்தை
யவாயங்கெட நிற்க வானந்தமாமே. Tiru. 2711.

[175] பழுத்தன வைந்தும் பழமறையுள்ளே
விழித்தங் குறங்கும் வினையறிவாரில்லை
எழுத்தறி வோமென் றுரைப்பர்களேதர்
எழுத்தை யழுத்து மெழுத்தறியாரே. St. 2714.

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and who is in the hearts of the celestials".[176] Here Sambandar says that the *Pañcākṣara* is the heart of the Vedas.

There is also another point which reveals itself, if we examine more closely this stanza of Sambandar. He says that the Śiva who rose up as the fire has to be seen through the *Pañcākṣara*. The Purāṇic story is that Viṣṇu and Brahmā could not see Him in that form fully. That is why the Purāṇas state also that Viṣṇu did penance for twelve years and through initiation in the *Pañcākṣara* by Upamanyu was able to gain a sight of Mahādeva, or this same Śiva.

Sambandar describes the *Śiva-path* as 'the path followed by the celestials, by men of the world, the path which destroys delusion and leads to *Mōkṣa*'.[177] In several places, Sambandar speaks of Śiva as the god of a thousand names evidently because of the wide prevalence at that time of the *Śiva-Sahasranāma* of the Purāṇas. But in one stanza he says that these thousand names are names of endless wisdom, implying thereby that they have an inner meaning of their own which must be pondered over by one seeking the knowledge of Śiva.[178]

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176 மந்திரநான் மறையாகி வானவர்
சிந்தையு ணின்றவர் தம்மையாள்வன
செந்தழ லோம்பிய செம்மைவேதியர்க்
கந்தியுண் மந்திரமஞ் செழுத்துமே. 280. 2.

177 விண்ணுலா வுந்நெறி வீடுகாட்டுந்நெறி
மண்ணுலா வுந்நெறி மயக்கந்தீர்க்குந்நெறி. 283. 5.

178 ......................ஈறிலா
ஞானப் பேராயிரம் பேரினன். 283. 5.

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There is one stanza in which Sambandar uses the expression *Sakala Śiva.* This is characteristically a *Śaiva Siddhānta* term, and is therefore likely to cause some confusion in the mind of the unwary reader. The Siddhāntins divide *Jīvas* or *Paśus* into three orders, *Vijñānakaḷar, Praḷayākaḷar* and *Sakaḷar.* Of these, the first have only the *Āṇava Mala,* the second have *Āṇava* and *Māya,* and the third have all the *malas* i.e., have *Karma* also.[179] But these are *Jīvas.* The *Malas* or impurities affect only *Jīvas* and not *Śiva.* Those who transcend all impurities become Śiva on account of the ultimate identity between *Śiva* and *Jīva.* Such souls are the Siddhas.[180] "The Siddhas who transcend the five impurities dwell in the final *mukti*", that is, *Śiva-Mukti.*[181] Sambandar does not speak of these *jīvas* when he speaks of '*Sakala Śiva*'. He says " Sakala Śiva whose form could not be known to the two (Brahmā, and Viṣṇu) who wished to see his head and feet".[182] Here the word '*Sakala*' means 'all' or "all-comprising'. Hence *Sakala-Śiva* is *Paramātma* as opposed to *Jīvātma.* Except in a state when the *Jīvātma* transcends the five *malas* or impurities, it cannot gain a knowledge of the *Paramātma.* Brahmā and Viṣṇu who could not see the *Paramātma,* or the

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[179] விஞ்ஞான ராணவங் கேவலமேவுவர்
அஞ்ஞானர் மாயையிற்றங்கு மிருமலர்
அஞ்ஞானர் அச்சகலத்தர் சகலராம் Tirumandiram 498 and elsewhere.

[180] சிவமாகியை வகைத்திண் மலஞ்செற்றோர்
அவமாகாச்சித்தர் முத்தாந்தத்து வாழ்வார். Tiru. 497.

[181] Tiru. 497.

[182] இனதளவி லிவனடியிணையு முடியறிது மெனவிகலுமிருவர்
தனதுருவ மறிவரிய சகலசிவன். 328. 9,

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*Sakala-Śiva* were not then in that state. They were then affected by the *Āṇava,* since they were functionaries doing the duty of creating and preserving the universe, by the *Māyā Mala,* because they sought its aid for the creation and preservation of the universe, and also by the *mala* of *Karma* since they took upon themselves this *Karma.* Sambandar gives a hint as to why they could not see the *Paramātma.* He uses the expression '*Igalum Iruvar*' which means 'The two who opposed Him, or took up an attitude of opposition'. The meaning is that if they did not entertain this idea of opposition, or separation, or differentiation, they could have realised their one-ness with the *Paramātma,* and could then have known him. Thus it is very clear that Sambandar (and likewise Appar and Sundarar also) do not intend to belittle Viṣṇu in the songs. The reference to this Purāṇic story is intended (as I have stated before) only to make the Śaiva remember that there is a Higher Śiva (or a Higher Viṣṇu or Higher Brahmā) who has to be meditated upon if *Śiva-Mukti* or *Ānanda* (of the *Satcidānanda*) is to be realised.

Another point that causes some difficulty to the man of intelligence is the constant reference in the *Tēvāram* songs to the various apparently meaningless external features of Śiva, such as the drum, the axe, etc. The rationalist is bound to ask "Why does Sambandar harp upon these things if he was one who had a knowledge of the formless *Brahman,* and if he wanted every one to reach It? Are not these real impediments to the thinking mind?" The answer to this will become clear if we understand what meaning these external features con-

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veyed to the thinking Śaiva. Tirumūlar gives us the real explanation for some of them; e.g., the 'deer' is used in the sense of *Aśuddha Māyā* etc.[183] and the 'sword' in the sense of 'knowledge'[184] in some places. The meaning is sufficiently well indicated by the context. Similarly the 'serpent' is used in the sense of *Jīvātma* in stanza 1621.[185] He says:—"The serpent is one, its hoods are five; its enjoyments are four; it gets into the hole and seats itself in two bodies. It opens out its hood there and dances. After the dance is over, it is tamed and dwells in the body". The meaning is "The Jīvātma enjoys the four *Puruṣārthas* (of *Dharma, Artha, Kāma,* and *Mōkṣa*) through the five senses. It gets into the body and plays its part dwelling in the *Sūkṣma* (subtle), and *Sthūla* (gross) bodies. After the play is over, it gets tamed, has its final dwelling in the body of Śiva". Thus we see that the serpents on the body of Śiva are intended to convey to the on-looker the idea that he has to get tamed, that is, to free himself from the activity of his senses, and seek final lodging on the body of Śiva, that is, gain union with Him. In another place, Tirumūlar explains the external features of the dancer Naṭarāja whose figure is seen in Cidambaram. He says: "Understand the drum (துடி) the outstretched arm carrying fire, the water (Gaṅgā), the hand with

183 மானின் கண் வாளுகி St. 385.

184 வாள் கொடுத்தானை St. 379.

185 நாகமொன்று படமைந்து நாலது
போகமுட் புற்றிற் பொருந்தி நிறைந்தது
வாகமிரண்டும் படவிரித் தாட்டொழிந்
தேகப்படஞ் செய்துடம் பிடமாமே.



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the axe, the foot standing on the demon (*Muyalakan*), as the formless (or *Sūkṣma*) *Pañcākṣara*,"[186] "*Sṛṣṭi* (creation) is in the drum; *Sthiti* (Preservation) is in the *Abhaya* hand; *Samhāra* (destruction) is in the hand holding the axe; in the pressing foot is *Tirōbhāva* (or hiding); and *Anugraha* (or blessing) in the uplifted foot".[187] These explanations by Saint Tirumūlar are definitely for the purpose of satisfying men who would naturally desire to understand the symbolism involved in the form of *Naṭarāja*. In another place the same poet explains the different dances of Śiva. He says "The Lord of Tillai (Cidambaram) himself dances the Koḍu Koṭṭi, Pāṇḍam, Kōḍu, the eight making up the Samhāra dance, the five dances and six dances".[188] The dances have been commented upon by Mr. Visvanatha Pillai as follows:—"The *Koḍu Koṭṭi* is the dance after the destruction of everything; *Pāṇḍam* is the dance after the destruction of the three cities, wearing the ashes of those cities; *Kōḍu*, or *Kāpālam*, is the dance holding Brahma's head in the hand; *Samhāra* is the dance at the time of destruction.

[186] மருவுந்துடியுடன் மன்னிய வீச்சு
மருவியவப்பு மனலுடன் கையுங்
கருவின் மிதித்த கமலப்பதமு
முருவில் சிவாய நமவெனவோதே 2798.

[187] அரன்றுடி தோற்ற மமைத்தறிதியா
மரனங்கி தன்னிலறையிற் சங்கார
மரனுற்றணைப் பிலமருந்தி ரோதாயி.
யரனடியென்று மனுக்கிரக மென்னே. 2799.

[188] கொடுகொட்டி பாண்டங் கோடு சங்கார
நடமெட் டொடைந்தாறு நாடியுணுங்
திடமுற் றெழுந்தேவ தாருவாந் தில்லை
வடமுற்ற மாவன மன்னவன்றானே. 2733,

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It is composed of the eight dances of *Sṛṣṭi, Sthiti, Samhāra, Tirōbhāva* and *Anugraha,* and also of *Muni-Tāṇḍava, Anavarata-Tāṇḍava* and *Ānanda-Tāṇḍava.* The 'five' are Śivānanda dance, Sundara dance, the golden city dance, the golden Cidambaram dance, and the wonderful dance. The six dances are, the five functions' dances and the Ānanda dance in the end."[189] The real meaning of the above can be grasped only if it is borne in mind that real *Ānanda* consists in the attainment of the imperishable. The only dancer therefore is the destroyer Śiva. His destruction is itself not a single act, but is a series of acts, and therefore at every stage there is a different kind of dance. More than this need not be stated here. Anyone anxious to know more may study the 9th *Tantra* of Tirumūlar with care.

We find the *Tēvāram* hymners alluding here and there to these dances of Śiva. We may believe they knew the inner meanings of the symbolism of dances.

Thus we can conclude that the constant references to the external characteristics of Śiva were made by Sambandar and others because they had two motives—one was to remind knowing *Bhaktas* that they had to meditate upon the inner meanings of these allusions, and the other was to provoke thought and meditation in the minds of the people who did not know the inner explanations. In fact these details could not but have stimulated thought—in other words would have been objects of meditation enabling the *Bhakta* to grasp the real truth himself. When the thinking

[189]Tirumandiram, p. 580.

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mind gets solutions without any external aid, the solutions are sure to be better remembered and the impressions will therefore be far more permanent and far more valuable than otherwise.

Now, we may examine the *Bhakti* path proper that is advised by Sambandar through his *Tēvāram* songs. There are several songs of his where he directly urges people to worship God, and thus release themselves from their earthly fetters. *Padigam* 62 is one of such poems. There he says:—"O Foolish mind, do not allow days to pass. Serve Him, whose throat is adorned with the poison. Hear the praise of Śiva. His name will remove all harm likely to befall us and our progeny. The god of Tirukkōḷili will ward off all evils, &c."[190] Again in a poem relating to Shiyāḻi, he says "Before you create for yourselves much trouble by thinking of your wealth, your children and such objects of desire, go to the good city of Kāḻi, the dwelling place of......Śiva, the god of gods".[191] The manner of worship is indicated by allusions in various places to the different kinds of *Abhiṣēkas*. He speaks of the *abhiṣēkas* by honey, ghee, milk, curd, cocoanut juice, sugarcane juice, and the five products of the cow.[192] One stanza alludes to the *Abhiṣēka*

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[190] நாளாய போகாமே நஞ்சணியுங் கண்டனுக்கே
ஆளாய வன்புசெய்வோ மடநெஞ் சேயரனுமம்
கேளாய் நங்கிளை கிளைக்குங் கேடுபடாத்திற மருளிக்
கோளாய நீக்குமவன் கோளிலி யெம்பெருமானே. 62. 1.

[191] நம்பொருணம் மக்களென்று நச்சியிச்சை செய்துநீர்
அம்பரமடைந்து சாலவல்லலுய்ப் பதன் முனம்
உம்பர் நாதனுத்த மன்னொளி மிகுத்த செஞ்சடை
நம்பன் மேவுநன்னகர் நலங்கொள் காழிசேர்மினே. 233. 1.

[192] தேனெய் பாறயிர் தெங்கிளநீர் கரும்பின்றெளி
ஆனஞ்சாடு முடியான் 142. 5

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by *Pañcāmṛta*.[193] One poem alludes to penance resorted to by people desirous of escaping the evils of this life. There Sambandar advises them to worship god as a means of realising their ends. The whole poem has the same purpose. We shall take up one stanza as a sample. "O, you who seek some place of penance for getting rid of this worldly life because you regard it as full of disease, and distress! Go and worship the god of Tūngānai-Māḍam".[104] This shows how the poet attached greater importance to worship than to penance and other things. He has special hymns glorifying the five letters as we have already seen,[105] and likewise he has sung one song on the sanctity of the sacred ashes. The prevalence of the *Sahasranāma* or the thousand names in honour of Śiva is also seen from several allusions to it.[105a] The *padigam* on Mylapore, and other similar poems speak of the monthly and annual festivals. We have already referred to the dances and songs sung by *Bhaktas*, also the chanting of the Vedas. Sambandar speaks of such *Bhaktas* as the fortunate people.[106] Even *Siddhas*, that is, men who had developed spiritual powers by restraint of the senses and

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193 பாலினொடு நெய்யாற் பழத்தினாற் பயின்றாட்டி. 61. 5.

194 ஒடுங்கும் பிணிபிறவி கேடென்றி வையுடைத்தாய வாழ்க்கை
யொழியத்தவம்
அடங்குமிடங்கருதி நின்றீரெல்லா மடிகளடி நிழற்கீழாளாம் வண்ணம்
............கோயில் சேர்த்தூங்கானை மாடந்தொழுமின்களே. 59. 1.

195 Padigam 280.

195a ஆயிரம் பேரினானண்ணிய கானப்பேர். Pad. 284. 5.

196 பாக்கியம் பலசெய்த பத்தர்கள் பாட்டொடும் பலபணிகள் பேணிய
தீக்கியல் குணத்தார் சிறந்தாரும் திருக்களருள்
வாக்கினான் மறையோதி. 187. 10.

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other *Yōgic* practices, were offering worship.[197] In another place, he calls these *Bhaktas* mad, that is, capable of becoming ecstatic in their religious fervour.[198] Thus the love-path or *Bhakti-mārga* of those days was not in any way different from that pursued at the present day. In fact, it must have been prevalent from the earliest days. We may, however, believe, that the example of Sambandar, and the several miracles performed by him must have given a fresh impulse too strong to be resisted by the people.

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197 ...........பத்தர் சித்தர்கள் பண்புவைகலும்
கொஞ்சியின் மொழியாற் றெழில்மல்கும். 188. 6.

198 பித்துலாவிய பத்தர்கள். 241. 6.

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## CHAPTER XI

### APPAR.

We may now pass on to examine the songs of Appar so as to note his influence upon society. Appar and Sambandar were contemporaries, as is seen from the *Periya Purāṇam* accounts about them. Both were god-inspired souls, who manifested their devotion by singing *padigams* which are of equal religious importance. But there is a difference. Appar was an old man and he attained to Śiva's grace not when he was a child, but when he had grown ripe. He had become a convert to Jainism and had even become one of its main advocates. It was then that he fell a victim to a disease which could not be cured. He therefore gave up Jainism and became a *Śiva Bhakta,* as is reflected in his songs. Therefore we detect in Appar's songs several traces of his superior learning. He was, judged from his songs, a much more learned man, than Sambandar, and we therefore have more chance of understanding through his *padigams* the condition of *Śaivism* prevalent in the land.

The first of these relates to his conversion to Śaivism. This is alluded to in very many songs one of which says "The god of Ārūr who increased my sins and made me listen to the words of the Jains, who made me suffer and entering the inside of my inside removed my falsehood (false doctrine), who

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visited me with disease, and then removed it so as to make me His servant".[1]

There are some accounts of the Pallava king of the time having thrown him into a lime-kiln, compelled him to drink poisoned milk, sent an elephant to kill him, and also thrown him into the sea after tying him to a heavy stone. We do not have any definite allusion to these events by Appar himself. There are some more, such as bringing Appūdi Aḍigaḷ's son to life etc. It does not matter how far these accounts were true. There is no doubt that his was a very powerful personality, and that his songs were filled with religious emotion and high spiritual realisation. He must also have led an exemplary life as a *Śiva Bhakta*. Hence he must have, like Sambandar, attracted a host of followers, and shown the world the nobility involved in devoting oneself entirely to the service of god. Both these saints must have succeeded throughly in removing the doubts of sceptics, in putting an end to the influence of Jainism, and in creating a new school of *Śiva Bhaktas* who would model their lives upon the lives of these Saints.

Now let us examine the relevant details in Appar's songs which throw additional light upon the condition of his times. It is unnecessary to go through those songs which resemble Sambandar's in all particulars. The marked difference between Appar and Sambandar is, as stated above, the former's deeper knowledge of

[1] பெருகுவித்தென் பாவத்தைப் பண்டெலாங் குண்டர்கடஞ் சொல்லேகேட்டு
உருகுவித்தென் னுள்ளத்தி னுள்ளிருந்த கள்ளத்தைத் தள்ளிப்போக்கி
அருகுவித்துப் பிணிகாட்டி யாட்கொண்டு பிணிதீர்த்தவாரூரர்..,5. 3.

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*Śaiva Siddhānta* doctrines. He ends *padigam* 4 by singing that Ārūr is the seat of Him, who is beyond the Twenty-five (i.e. the 25 *Tatvas*).[2] Here he refers to the 25 *Tatvas* of the *Sāṅkhyas*. He is careful not to say that Śiva is the 26th *Tatva*, because he adopts elsewhere the *Śaiva* category of 96 *Tatvas*.[2a] Śiva is, according to him, beyond all of them.

Both Sambandar and Appar praise the five letters. Both speak of the *Mantra* in relation to the Brahmans. But there is a difference. Sambandar says:—"The final *Mantra* of the good Brahmans who raise the holy fire is the *Pañcākṣara*";[3] but Appar says:—"The rare jewel of the Brāhmaṇa is the Veda with its six angas; the rare jewel for *us* is the *Pañcākṣara*."[4] In reading Sambandar's song, we are not likely to notice the difference between the Brahmans believing in Śaivism and the other Śaivas. But it is quite clear in Appar's song. We have, here, unmistakable evidence to show the existence of the class of Śaivas standing side by side with the Brahmans or the *Andaṇar*. The latter class could not all have been believers in Śaivism; for some were Vaiṣṇavas, that is, worshippers of Viṣṇu as the supreme, some were neutral having faith only in the Vedas, and some were believers in all the three, i.e., the Vedas, Śiva and Viṣṇu. The Śaiva, whether he was a

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2 ஐயஞ்சினப் புறத்தானு மாரூரமர்ந்த வம்மானே. 4. 10.

2a முப்பது முப்பத்தாறு முப்பது மிடுகுரும்பை. 51. 3.

3 செந்தழ லோம்பிய செம்மை வேதியர்க்
கந்தியுண் மந்திரமஞ் செழுத்துமே. Samb. 280. 2.

4 அந்தணர்க் கருங்கலம் அருமறை யாறங்கம்
* * * *
நங்களுக் கருங்கலம் நமச்சிவாயவே. 11. 5.



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Brahman, or a non-Brahman, was a believer in the Veda, but a worshipper of Śiva. He believed in the Vēda because his doctrine was that the Vedas came from the mouth of Śiva himself.[5] The Vaiṣṇava had a similar doctrine, because he said that the Vēdas were revealed by Viṣṇu.[6] The Śaiva Brahman held the view that the Brahman who believed in the Veda had ultimately to seek the aid of Śiva if he was to gain final release. That was why Sambandar said 'The final *Mantra* of the pious Brahman is the *Pañcākṣara*'. Appar did not say anything like that, because he was not himself a Brahman, and was too good-natured a man to offend the sentiments of anybody. He therefore satisfied himself by saying "The Brahman's jewel is the Veda. Ours is the *Pañcākṣara*". In the next stanza, he says:—"Though one does not have good birth, that which gives much good according to birth is the *pañcākṣara*".[7] This shows that he, like the rest of the Śaivas, believed that the *Pañcākṣara* was the common *Mantra* that could be given (by the *Guru*) to people of all castes. But Appar also says, herein, that the resulting benefit will be in keeping with the birth of the person who received the *Mantra*. It must be noticed that there is absolutely no mention of the superiority or inferiority of one caste to another, nor is there a condemnation of one sect in preference to another. That must have

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[5] விரித்தானை நால்வர்க்கு வெவ்வேறு வேதங்கள். 7. 8.

[6] இசைகொள் வேதநூலென்றிவை பயந்தவனே.
Tirumangai Āḻvār: Periya Tirumoḻi, viii, 2.

[7] குலமிலராகிலுங் குலத்திற் கேற்பதோர்
நலமிகக் கொடுப்பது நமச்சிவாயவே. 71. 6,

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therefore been the attitude that pious believers in one religion had towards others.

*Padigam* 14 gives evidence of Appar's knowledge of the Purāṇas relating to Śiva. The first speaks of the drinking of the poison. The second stanza narrates the story of Śiva being the *'stambha'*, or the support of the whole universe, at the time of the *praḷaya* or the great flood when everything gets dissolved except the one great God. In that state, says Appar, no god is capable of reaching it. Then it is called also *'Param'*. That *'Param'* appeared before Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and could not be seen by either. That same is, he says, the god who became Śiva.[8] Here what we have to notice is that Appar has the motive of making people understand three aspects of Śiva. (1) The lower Śiva, the functionary whose duty it was to dissolve the universe; (2) the higher form called *Parāpara* where Śiva appears in His bi-sexual form, i.e., as *Śiva* and *Śakti*. This is the great *jyōtis* of the *Parā* aspect of Śiva. Hence it has the name *Parañjōti*. It was that form that baffled, according to the Śaiva, the comprehension of Brahmā and Viṣṇu. Sambandar, as we have seen, described this form in his description of god called *Ēkamba* of Kāñcī. (3) Beyond even this form of *jyōtis* or brilliance was the *Stambha*, or the pillar form, the great *Skambha* of the Atharva Vēda. That cannot be described at all. That in fact is one way of express-

[8] நிரவொலி வெள்ளமண்டி நெடுவண்டமூட நிலநின்று தம்பமதுவப்
பரமொரு தெய்வமெய்த நிதுவொப்பதில்லை யிருபாலு நின்றுபணியப்
பிரமனு மாலுமேலை முடியோடு பாதமறியாமை நின்றபெரியோன்
பரமுதலாய தேவர்சிவனாய மூர்த்தியவனா நமக்கொர்சரணே, 14. 2.

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ing the *Param* or the *Para-Brahmam*. It is this that is referred to here by Appar first. It is not a composite form of *Śakti* and *Śiva* but is purely the *Śiva* form (if it could be spoken of as having a form). In other words it is the *Śivam* of the *Śaiva Siddhāntin*. This idea is still further developed by Appar in the next stanza. It is worth while noticing its meaning because it shows that Appar was not ignorant of the Vaiṣṇava conception of the higher Viṣṇu. He says:—"Our sole refuge is that *Mūrti* (or god) who is beyond (*Para*) the boy (Viṣṇu) residing in the banyan leaf (ஆலிலை), who is Himself the little form of that brilliant being who swallowed the entire universe including this world and the celestial worlds. That brilliant being is again the manifestation of the one highest form".[9] Here Appar is careful not to call the Highest by the name of Śiva or Viṣṇu. He only marks the order of manifestation. First, there is the one-formed highest. Then it shows itself as Brilliance (*Parañjōti*). Lastly, that Brilliance takes the small form of the child on the leaf. That is spoken of as the higher Viṣṇu by the Vaiṣṇava. His greatness consists in swallowing up the entire universe, or in other words pervading and sustaining the universe. He is also conceived of as the great Nārāyaṇa of the milk ocean. The first is, according to Appar, the sole refuge. He is very careful not call it by the name of Śiva or Viṣṇu, even in their higher manifestations. As ordinarily understood, the Vaiṣṇava conception

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[9] ........ஏகவுருவாகி ......சமயங்களாறி னுருவாகிநின்ற தழலோன்
ஞாலமுமேலை விண்ணொடுலகேழு முண்டுகுறளா யொராலினிலைமேல்
பாலனு மாயவற்கோர் பரமாயமூர்த்தி யவனெ நமக்கோர்சரணே. 14. 3.

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stops short with *Param-jyōtis*. So Appar identifies Nārāyaṇa, or the higher Viṣṇu, with the Brilliance or *Parañjōti*. But since, there is the *Param* beyond this *Parañjōti* (or *Parāparai,* according to Tirumūlar), Appar says that the *Param* is his final refuge. It is open to the great Vaiṣṇava Āḻvārs to identify that *Param* with the higher form of Nārāyaṇa Himself, as it is to *Śaivas* like Appar to identify it with their *Śivam.* But Appar scrupulously avoids applying either the name of *Śivam* or *Mahā Viṣṇu* to it, for he knows that it is absurd to effect any differentiation in that highest form which is, in his own words, only *Ēkavuru* or the One form.

Incidentally, we are enabled also to understand the inner meaning of all the Śaiva allusions about Viṣṇu worshipping Śiva and all the Vaiṣṇava allusions, about Śiva worshipping Viṣṇu. The lower Śiva (the functionary who takes equal place with Brahmā and Viṣṇu) has to regard Nārāyaṇa (the *Parāpara* of Tirumūlar, and the *Parañjōti* of the Tēvāram hymners) as his superior. The lower Viṣṇu has to worship the *Ardhanārīśvara* form, or the *Paraṁjyōtis,* or the *Parāpara,* as his superior. But this higher Viṣṇu and higher Śiva are identical, and both have the *Param* beyond them. The Purāṇic allusions therefore are not contradictory. But, the Śaiva or the Vaiṣṇava who, in his devotion, identifies all manifestations of Śiva or Viṣṇu with the higher (i.e., the *Param* and *Paraṁ-jyōtis*) forms may go wrong in his interpretation of the allusions with the result that the Śaiva will believe only

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in the Śaiva Purāṇas, and the Vaiṣṇavas in the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas.[10]

From the above explanation, it will be seen that Appar could not have been either ignorant, or intolerant, of the Vaiṣṇava religion. The remaining stanzas mention the Purāṇic incidents of the destruction of *Tārakāsura,* the three cities, *Yama* (when he went to take away the life of Mārkaṇḍēya), the Dakṣa sacrifice, etc. They do not need any special comment. There is a small point touched upon by Appar in a stanza where he says:—"Those of you who are able to conquer your five *Indriyas* can see Him of the *Mantra, Ōṁkāra,* if you think with concentration."[11] The idea is that beyond the *Ōm* none can see anything. One can only get lost in the Highest. In that highest condition (called *Śiva-mukti* by Sambandar), there is no duality, and so nothing can be said about seeing or not seeing. But if one desires to see, one can do that in the stage immediately below the Highest (called *Para-mukti* by Tirumūlar as seen above). In that second stage, one can dwell in the *Ōm,* and *Upa-Śānti* will be gained by meditation on this *mantra.*[12] Here we see that both Appar and Sambandar are expressing a view which is consistent with that held by Tirumūlar.

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[10] It is not necessary to regard the names of '*Para*' and '*Paraṁjyōtis*' as of fundamental importance. Any other names may be used to indicate the same conceptions. I have preferred to use them because I have used them before and because the *Tēvāram* hymners and Tirumūlar use them.

[11] ஒன்றவே யுணர்திராகி லோங்காரத் தொருவனாகும்
வென்ற வைம்புலன் கடம்மை விலக்குதற் குரியீரெல்லாம்.

Padigam 25. 9.

[12] Tirumūlar, Stanza 2474.

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The *Gñāna* practice of the *Śaiva* is stated by Appar in a nut-shell in one stanza. He says:—"The Lord of Tiruppayaṟṟūr is capable of banishing all anger by causing enjoyment in the mind of those who restrain their senses, practise concentration, transcend their two houses (the *Sthūla* and *Sūkṣma* bodies), and unite the two (their *Jīvātma* with *Śiva*)."[13] It is clear, therefore, that these are the things to be achieved by the Śaivas. It is for the cultivation of this (*Vairāgya*) or restraint, concentration, etc., that the different *Sādhanas, Caryā,* etc., are prescribed for the *Śaiva.* Appar evidently alludes to the *Sādhanas* when he says elsewhere "He became *all the Śiva-paths* in the minds of those who reflect.[14]

Appar makes a pointed allusion to the *Mōhini* form in which Viṣṇu appeared, according to the Purāṇas, after the churning of the milk ocean. The story goes that Śiva embraced Viṣṇu in that form. This apparently silly story is made by Appar to yield its rich esoteric significance. He says "To that God of brilliance, there is no consort other than Hari who is extolled by all the *Dēvas* as their god".[15] The question will arise, "Did not Śiva have his consort *Umā*? The answer is that

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13 புலன்களைப் போகநீக்கிப் புந்தியை யொருங்கவைத்து
இலங்களைப் போகவின் றிரண்டையும் நீக்கியொன்றாய்
மலங்களை மாற்றவல்லார் மனத்தினுட் போகமாகிச்
சினங்களைக் களைவர்போலுந் திருப்பயற்றூரனாரே. 32. 9.

14 சிந்தையார் சிந்தையுள்ளார் சிவநெறி யனைத்துமானார் 35. 2.

15 ..............சோதியார்க்குப்
பிரிவிலா வமரர் கூடிப்பெருந்தகைப் பிரானென்றேத்தும்
அரியலாற் றேவியில்லை. 40. 5.

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*Umā* is the consort of *Mahēśvara,* the equal of the other functionaries Viṣṇu and Brahmā. But this form of brilliance, or *Paraṁjyōtis*, is *Parāpara* (just inferior to *Param* or *Śivam*). There the deity is bi-sexual. The female aspect—to put it so—is the Viṣṇu aspect, and the male aspect is the Śiva aspect. The Śaiva would regard this bi-sexual form (to put it vulgarly) as *Ardha-nārīśvara.* If a fitting name should be given to it, the name *Harihara* can be given. Hence it is that *Śāstā* (the offspring of *Śiva* and *Mōhini*) is called *Harihara-Putra,* or the son of *Harihara.* Appar nicely says that *Jyōtis* has no *Dēvi.* The Dēvi aspect in that composite form is represented by Viṣṇu. This very same idea he expresses with greater emphasis and perhaps more directly in another place where he says "He (Śiva) has, as one part of Him, *Māyan* (Viṣṇu) who ate the earth".[16] It is open to interpret this stanza as "He had by his side Viṣṇu". But I feel that it is not what Appar intends because he (as well as Sambandar) always uses the expression *'Orupāgaṁ Koṇḍār'* in the sense of 'having one part, or one half of Him'.[17] It seems sufficiently clear that Appar wanted all Śaivas to regard Viṣṇu as only another aspect of Śiva, whenever he wrote such lines.

In a stanza about the god of Tiruvoṟṟiyūr, he speaks about the existence of Śiva in the body. He says:—"The Lord of Oṟṟiyūr is consciousness in the form of life which will be seated in the *Ātma* by rare

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[16] மண்ணினையுண்ட மாயன்றன்னையோர் பாகங்கொண்டார். 43. 7.

[17] பெண்ணொரு பாகமாகிப் பேணுமாப் பாடியாரே. 48. 3.

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penance."[18] The idea is that consciousness is roused by penance, and the *Ātma* in the body becomes united with Śiva seated there. Here Appar reveals his knowledge of the *Tatvas* according to the *Śaiva Siddhānta* philosophy. These *Tatvas* are reckoned as 96. The 96 *Tatvas* are as follows:—24 *Ātma Tatvas,* 10, *Nāḍis,* 5 *Avasthās* or conditions, 3 *malās* or impurities, 3 *guṇās* (*Satva, Rajas* and *Tamas*), 3 *Manḍalas* (*Sūrya* the Sun, *Agni* the Fire and *Candra* the moon), three humours (*Vāda, Pitta* and *Ślēṣma*), 8 *Vikāras* or modifications (*Kāma, Krōdha, Lōbha, Mōha, Māda, Mātsarya, Ḍambha* and *Asūya*), 6 *Ādhāras,* 7 *Ḍhātus,* 10 *Vāyus,* 5 *Kōśas,* 9 doorways. The 24 *Ātma Tatvas* are the five elements (*Bhūtas*), 5 *Tanmātras,* (*Śabda,* etc.), 5 *Gñāna Indriyas,* 5 *Karmendriyas* and 4 *Karaṇas* (*Manas, Buddhi, Citta* and *Ahaṅkāra*). All these 96 relate to the *body*. Appar says that in different places.[19] Over and above 96, there are the five *Kañcukās* or coverings. They are *Niyati, Kalā, Kāla, Rāga* and *Vidyā*. Appar alludes to these also just in the place where he alludes to the 96, which are of the body. He says:—"The five enter the body and cause weariness to the 96 (*tatvās* of the body)".[20] Thus it is seen that according to Appar, it is the 5 *Kañcukās* that distress the body.[21]

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18 ...............அருந்தவத்தா லான்மாவி னிடமதாகி
உசிப்பெனு முணர்வுமுள்ளா ரொற்றியூ ருடையகோவே. 45. 2.

19 Padigam 54, St. 3; Padigam 67, St. 5, etc.

20 ஆக்கைதொக்கு நின்றைவர் தொண்ணூற்றறு வருந்துயக்க
மெய்த...............அவர்கள் செய்யும் வேதனை. 67. 5.

21 According to Śaiva Siddhāntins, there is also the practice of grouping the Tatvas so as to make up the number 36. *Vide* Nallasvāmi Piḷḷai; Studies in Śaiva Siddhānta, p. 35.

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In many places Śiva is spoken of as being in eight forms.[22] According to the Sanskrit interpretation of the term *Aṣṭa mūrti* (an epithet of Śiva), the eight forms are those of the five elements, the sun, the moon and the sacrificing priest.[23] Very probably this was the sense in which Appar used it, for very often he alludes to Śiva, becoming 'water, fire, earth, the sky, the beautiful shining lights (the sun and the moon)', etc.[24] Whenever the *Tēvāram* hymners use the expression '*Vēdiyan*' for Śiva, it is Śiva as the Sacrificer that is meant. That is also the reason why Śiva is given the sacred thread in the descriptions about him. This gives the lie direct to all fanciful theories that Śiva is a Dravidian diety, etc. If more proof were needed, we may examine one stanza of Appar where he says:— "If the red god who has got the name Śiva only for Himself will make me His servant, and, if I call Him by the name Bhava for several days, then He will appear before me thinking that I will not leave off calling Him, even if many days pass''.[25] It will be remembered that the expression '*Upavītinē*' appears even in the *Śatarudrīya* hymn of the Yajur Vēda. So the conception starts from there.

It is interesting to notice Appar calling Lord Śiva by the name of 'Śaiva'. He says "O, Dēva Dēva (Lord

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[22] அட்டமாவுரு விஞனே. 57. 3.

[23] Apte's Dictionary, p. 185.

[24] நீருமாய்த் தீயுமாகி நிலனுமாய் விசும்புமாகி
ஏருடைக் கதிர்களாகி யிமையவரிறைஞ்சநின்று. 54. 8.

[25] சிவனெனு நாமந்தனக்கே யுடைய செம்மேனி யம்மான்
அவனெனை யாட்கொண்டளித்திடு மாகிலவன்றனையான்
பவனெனு நாமம் பிடித்துத்திரிந்து பன்னாளழைத்தால்
இவனெனைப் பன்னாளழைப் பொழியானென் றெதிர்ப்படுமே. 113. 9.

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of Lords) whose red lotus feet are worshipped by all, who has the black throat, O! *Śaiva* who holds the deer, the goat and the axe, who is the master of me, the dog, that has no knowledge although I have studied much, O father of Ālavāy".[26] What is the object of Appar's calling Śiva by the name of '*Śaiva*'? To me, it seems that he is thereby intending to show that in the form in which Śiva appears as holding the deer, etc., he is only a Śaiva, i.e., one who belongs to Śivam the highest and not Śivam itself. '*Śaiva*' means 'belonging to Śiva'. The *Śiva Mūrti*, or manifestation, is only 'belonging to *Śivam*' and therefore inferior to the real '*Śivam*' which is formless.

In one place Appar states that the reason why Śiva destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice was that Dakṣa did not have a knowledge of the *Tantras* or *Āgamas*. He says:—To Śāykkāḍu has come the Lord who blessed the Moon on the day on which He destroyed the sacrifice performed by Dakṣa, who was ignorant of the *Tantra;* on that day, Indra, Brahmā, Agni and the eight Vasus praised and worshipped Him with Vedic mantras.[27] Here, the contrast between worship and sacrifice is brought into prominence. Dakṣa did not worship Śiva; he only sacrificed, and so his sacrifice was destroyed. Why did

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[26] செய்யவின் சமலபாதஞ் சேருமா தேவர் தேவே
மையணி கண்டத்தானே மான்மறி மழுவொன்றேந்தும்
சைவனே சாலஞானங் கற்றறிவிலாத நாயேன்
ஐயனே யாலவா யிலப்பனே யருள்செய்யாயே. 62. 4.

[27] இந்திரன் பிரமனங்கி யெண்வகை வசுக்களோடு
மந்திர மறையதோதி வானவர் வணங்கி வாழ்த்தத்
தந்திர மறியாத்தக்கன் வேள்வியைத் தகர்த்த ஞான்று
சந்திரற் கருள்செய்தாருஞ் சாய்க்காடு மேவினாரே. 65. 5.

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not Dakṣa worship Śiva? Appar says, he did not do so because he did not know the *Tantra*. He knew only the *Mantra*. The *Tantra* or the *Āgama* alone would teach *Upāsanā* or worship. The Vēda has two parts, the *Gñāna Kāṇḍa* and the *Karma Kāṇḍa*, i.e., that portion which leads to knowledge and that which ordains the duty of performing sacrifices. The *Āgama* it is that teaches the *Bhakti* path. That is the *Tantra* which was not known to Dakṣa. This seems to be the meaning of Appar. As for the use of the word *Tantra* to denote the *Āgamas*, it is very well justified because many of the *Āgamas* are called *Tantras*. e.g. In the Kāraṇāgama, the sub-divisions are called Kāraṇa Tantra, Pāvana Tantra, Daurgīya Tantra, Mahēndra Tantra, Vīma Tantra, Māraṇa Tantra and Īśāna Tantra. In the Yōgīśāgama, we have the Tāratantra; in the Cintiyāgama, we have the Vāma Tantra; in the Asitāgama, the Pārvati Tantra, in the Sahasrāgama, the Alaṁkāra Tantra and so on. Thus it is clearly seen that Appar had a clear conception of the relative values of the Vēdas and the *Āgamas*.

One of Appar's stanzas reveals the practice of repeating the *Āgamas* which must have prevailed during his time. He says:—"Because of our loneliness, it is difficult for us to keep company with the dark ghosts. (So) my tongue will go on uttering the *Āgamas* in the presence of its companion (the mind) to the accompaniment of the music of the unrivalled Tiruviḍaimarudūr".[28] The stanza is written in the erotic vein.

[28] துணையிலா மையிற்றாங்கிருட் பேய்களோ
டணையலா வதெமக்கரி தேயெனு
இணையிலா விடைமா மருதில்லெழு
பணையிலா கமஞ்சொல்லுங் தன்பாங்கிக்கே. 129. 4.

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The poet is like the sweet-heart who is abandoned by her lover (God), and has therefore to talk about her lover to the *Pāṅgi* or female companion. This talk about the lover is the *Āgama* that Appar's tongue utters. The idea is that Śiva the lover who is always with his ghosts, is unseen by the *Bhakta*, and so the *Bhakta* has only ghosts as his companions. He cannot feel satisfied with that state of loneliness, and therefore seeks a companion to whom he utters his inward thoughts. The stanza is valuable to us as illustrating how *Āgamas* were being uttered by *Bhaktas* like Appar.

Some of Appar's songs are intended as advice to thinking minds about the manner in which they were to practise realisation. He says:—You can see the Kaḍamba youth's (Subrahmaṇya's) father (Śiva), if you look for Him with the light of wisdom issuing forth from the wick of life, fed with the ghee of contemplation (உணர்வு) in the lamp of the mind within the house of your body".[20] This according to him is the method to be adopted for self-illumination. That is fitted for the thoughtful person. Another similar poem is intended for the person who takes delight in agricultural operations. He says:—'Plough with truth; plant the seed of desire (for knowledge); weed out untruth; irrigate the field with the water of patience; supervise your work by looking into yourself; build the fence of good rules, (தகவு Dharma); if you do these

[20] உடம்பெனு மனையகத்து ளுள்ளமே தகழியாக
மடம்படு முணர் நெய்யட்டி யுயிரெனுந் திரி மயக்கி
யிடம்படு ஞானத்தீயா லெரிகொள விருந்து நோக்கில்
கடம்பமர் காளை தாதை கழலடி காணலாமே. 75. 4.

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well, '*Śiva gati* will grow there at once''.[30] There are several more of such stanzas, but we shall stop with one more so that we may see how he advises such *Bhaktas* as will find satisfaction only in formal worship. He says:—''Regard your body as the temple, your mind as the worshipper, Truth as purity (needed for worship), the jewel of the mind (mana maṇi) as the Liṅga, love as the ghee, milk, etc. Perform pūjā to Īśa thus''.[31]

Whatever might be the counsel given by Appar to different sorts of people to suit their different degrees of development, his own faith was unshaken in the view that unless 'the citta is made one-pointed, and the *mantra* of *Śivāya Namaḥ* is contemplated upon, God's grace cannot be gained''.[32] He says, ''Through your grace, I have made my mouth shine by the utterance of *Śivāya Namaḥ;* I have worn the sacred ashes. Give me *Śivagati*''.[33]

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30 மெய்ம்மை யாமுழவைச் செய்து விருப்பெனும் வித்தைவித்திப்
பொய்ம்மை யாம் களையைவாங்கிப் பொறையெனு நீரைப்பாய்ச்சித்
தம்மையு நோக்கிக்கண்டு தகவெனும் வேலியிட்டுச்
செம்மையுணிற் பராகிற் சிவகதி விளையுமன்றே. 76. 2.

31 காயமே கோயிலாகக் கடிமன மடிமையாக
வாய்மையே தூய்மையாக மனமணி யிலிங்கமாக
நேயமே நெய்யும் பாலா நிறைய நீரமையவாட்டிப்
பூசனை யீசனார்க்குப் போற்றவிக் காட்டினோமே. 6. 4.

32 சித்தமொருக்கிச் சிவாயநம வென்றிருக்கினல்லால்
* * *
அத்தனருள் பெறலாமோ. 95. 5.

33
.......................................உனதருளால்
திருவாய்ப் பொலியச் சிவாயநமவென்று நீறணிந்தேன்
தருவாய் சிவகதி. 95. 6.

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Appar seems to have been very anxious to remove all kinds of doubts that might have arisen in the minds of the Śiva worshippers; for he says "The same *Puṇyan* (Pure God) will be spoken of as the god of the Vēdas, the god of sacrifices, and the god of the elements".[34] It was quite likely that he had to give this teaching to those Brahmans who pinned their faith on sacrifices and the Vedas alone, and also to those Śaivas who equally wrongly pinned their faith on the *Śiva Mārga*. He apparently addresses the former when he says:—"What is the use of your troubling yourselves (to walk about here and there) with a stick, the grass (*darbha*), the *Kūrca* (made of *Darbha* grass), the skin (deer skin) etc.? O! Lord of Mayilāḍuturai, is even the sacred thread needed for those who have understood?"[35] And for the purpose of making it clear that Śiva would bless every one, whichever of the six *Samayas* or *Mārgas* he pursued, he says:—"His (Śiva's) feet are capable of giving satisfaction to every one of the followers of the six *Samayas*. They are also capable of lifting up advanced *Bhaktas* to the beautiful path".[36] This means that Appar regarded the *Śiva Neṟi* or *Mārga* as the highest; but on that account it ought not to be believed

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[34] வேதத்தா னென்பர் வேள்வியுளா னென்பர்
பூதத்தா னென்பர் புண்ணியன் றன்னையே. 125. 9.

[35] கோலும் புல்லுமொரு கையிற் கூர்ச்சமும்
தோலும் பூண்டு துயரமுற்றென் பயன்
நீலமா மயிலாடு துறையனே
நூலும் வேண்டுமோ நுண்ணுணர்ந் தோர்கட்கே. 153. 8.

[36] ..................ஆறுசமயத்தவரவரைத்
தேற்றுந்தகையன தேறிய தொண்டரைச் செந்நெறிக்கே
ஏற்றுந்தகையன. 101. 7.

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that Śiva would not bless the others. Again, he says that the Śiva of the *Śaiva Siddhāntin* was not different from the Śiva of the Vēdas. He says:—"His feet are those of Him who is called *Svayambhu* and *Sthāṇu* in the four Vēdas".[37] The motive of the saint to effect unity among the different schools of *Śiva Bhaktas* is very evident in these explanations.

In one stanza he speaks of Śiva as incomprehensible. He says:—"There is none who has seen the source of the *Tatvas*. Those who see the foremost *Tatva* do not really see (i.e., they see themselves as different from the seen, and so their knowledge is imperfect). The Lord of Pugali is not capable of being known by those who do not become established in the source of the *Tatvas*."[38] He explains the idea somewhat when he says "The Lord of Kāñcī is the music in the song, the sweetness in the fruit. He cannot be called male or female. He has no dimensions. His form is different. He is the lustre in the eyes".[39] Just in the same manner in which sweetness is in the song, etc. Śiva is, says Appar, in the thought or the mind.[40] Appar was in

[37] சயம்புவென்றேதகு தாணுவென்றே சதுர்வேதங் கணின்
றியம்புங்கழலின். 101. 8.

[38] தத்துவந்தலைகண் டறிவாரில்லைத்
தத்துவந்தலை கண்டவர் கண்டிலர்
தத்துவந்தலை நின்றவர்க்கல்லது
தத்துவனலன் றண் புகலூரனே. 160. 7.

[39] பண்ணிலோசை பழத்திலின் சுவை
பெண்ணொ டாணென்று பேசற் கரியவன்
வண்ணமில்லி வடிவு வேறாயவன்
கண்ணிலுண்மணி கச்சியேகம்பனே. 161. 8.

[40] "சிந்தை யுட்சிவ மாய்நின்ற" 162. 5.

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favour of imparting instruction in the five letters even to ignorant people, for he was of opinion that Śiva would appear (with his consort) in the minds of all who would utter the 'five letters' and understand its significance.[41] The saint said this because he must have seen and heard of some of the *Nāyanārs,* and possibly others, who had gained real illumination in this way. Further, he paid more attention to practice than to panditry or pure intellectual scholarship. We find him reviling learned men who would not translate their views into action. "O! fools, who speak of various Śāstras. Of what avail is your ancestry and family? If you worship Śiva saying that he (alone) is pure, you will gain His grace in a trice".[42]

He was so very eager to spread the worship of Śiva that he could not help over and over again asking people to do it. Love of god must be felt and manifested. That was his central teaching. "Dance, weep, worship, sing",[43] said he. Again, "O servants of god, who were, in your youth, deaf (to words of good counsel), save yourselves, now, when your body is bent with age, by worshipping the lord of Tiruvalañjuḻi".[44]

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[41] ஏதுமொன்று மறிவிலராயினும்
ஓதி யஞ்செழுத்து முணர் வார்கட்குப்
பேதமின்றி யவரவருள்ளத்தே
மாதுந்தாமும் மகிழ்வர் மாற்பேறரே. 174. 1.

[42] சாத்திரம் பலபேசும் சழக்கர்காள்
கோத்தி ரமுங்குலமுங் கொண்டென் செய்வீர்
பாத்திரஞ் சிவமென்று பணிதிரேல்
மாத்தி ரைக்குளருளு மாற்பேறரே. 174. 3.

[43] ஆடுமின் னழுமின் றொழுமின் னடிபாடுமின். 177. 8.

[44] இளைய காலமெம்மானை யடைகிலாத்
துளையிலாச் செவித்தொண்டர் காணும்முடல்
வளையுங்காலம் வலஞ்சுழி யீசனைக்
களைகணுகக் கருதி நீருய்ம்மினே. 180. 3.



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*Padigam* 203 is a poem where all the allusions are apparently to the *Śaiva Āgamas,* etc. Some of them are very easy to understand, while others are not. One of the stanzas seems to give an explanation of the five hoods of Śiva's one serpent. It says "Five are the *tatvas* of that which is worn round the waist";[45] The line can be understood in the light of Tirumūlar's line which says 'the serpent is one, its hoods are five'. The commentator of the latter explains the serpent to mean the *Ātma,* and the hoods to mean the five senses. So the serpent is the *Jīvātma* resting upon *Śiva,* the *Paramātma.* This meaning is supported by the next line of the *Tēvāram* stanza where Appar says that it is He (Śiva) who became 'the five, the five and the separate (groups of) five.[46] The meaning is that Śiva, Himself became the five *Tanmātras,* the five *Karmēndriyas,* the five *Gñānendriyas* and other groups of five. These are the *tatvas* through which the *Jīvātma* has worldly enjoyment. But when knowledge dawns upon the *Jīvātma,* the senses are subdued and the *Jīvātma* finds its resting-place in *Paramātma* or *Śiva.* Thus, interpreted properly, Appar wants us to have this conception of the rather unseemly figure of Śiva with the snake on his body.

In certain places Appar reveals his high realisations; e.g. he says:—"I saw within myself the fragrance, the *guru* whom my mind seeks, the *Dēvi* whom my *guṇas*

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45 ......................அரைமிசை
அஞ்சுபோலரை யார்த்தநின்றத்துவம் 203. 5.

46 அஞ்சு மஞ்சு மோரோரைஞ்சு மாயவன், 203. 5.

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worship, and also the form of Śiva living inside my heart''.[47] All the other stanzas in that poem are to the same effect; the only difference being that the Śiva that is seen inside the heart is described variously as 'brilliance' 'fullness' etc. Elsewhere he expresses regret that people do not meditate upon *Śiva* and *Jīva.*[48] He wants that people should practise the Sādhana of regarding everything as the manifestation of Śiva.[49] As if to drive home this teaching, he says in another place "He is Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā, the four Vēdas, the completest Being, the Holiest, the Oldest, etc.''.[50] He also wants that people should know that, though Śiva is all these, He is none of these. So he says (elsewhere), "He is without name, without birth, death or disease''.[51] Everyone knows that these truths are not the monopoly of the Śaiva or the Vaiṣṇava. It is these attributes that are food for the spiritual reflection of every Hindu, to whichever sect he may belong. They have their origin in the Upaniṣads, and they have sunk deep in the minds of all Hindus. Whenever any *Bhakta* thinks of god, he imagines that his god (be it Gaṇapati, or Subrahmaṇya,

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[47] மருவினை மடநெஞ்ச மனம்புகும்
குருவினைக் குணத்தாலே வணங்கிடும்
திருவினைச் சிந்தையுட் சிவனாய்நின்ற
உருவினைக் கண்டுகொண்ட தென்னுள்ளமே. 212. 8.

[48] சீவனைச் சிவனைச் சிந்தியார்களே. 214. 6.

[49] எல்லாம் சிவனென்ன நின்றாய் போற்றி. 219.

[50] நாரணன்காண் நான்முகன்காண் நால்வேதன்காண்
ஞானப் பெருங்கடற்கோர் நாவாயன்ன
பூரணன்காண் புண்ணியன்காண் புராணன்றான்காண் &c. 222. 3.

[51] பேரொன்றில்லார் பிறப்பில்லா ரிறப்பில்லார் பிணியொன்றில்லார்.
224. 8.

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or Śiva or Sūrya or Viṣṇu or Aṁbikā), is the god of all gods, is without birth or death, and so on. In fact this is the underlying unity within the multiplicity of different worships in Hinduism. Appar is an advocate of Śaivism. But like the true Hindu that he is, he does not want to get rid of this popular religious attitude because it is a correct and wholesome one. So he explains in these stanzas, how Śaivism is not in any way opposed to the popular notions. All paths leading to god are good paths, but the Śaiva will have his preference. He will call his path, the best of the best. Appar says "Śiva stands as the best of all good paths".[52]

It will be unnecessary to take up for examination the several other references made by Appar to the Śaivism of his time. It is enough to note that his deep religious fervour, thorough scholarship, exemplary life and mellifluous poetry were bound to have enormous influence over his contemporaries and advance the cause of Śaivism by leaps and bounds. In combination with the other great luminary of his days (Sambandar), he may be said to have practically driven Jainism out of the Tamil land.

### *The saints and others alluded to by Appar.*

Before leaving Appar, we shall take stock of the *Periya Purāṇam* saints and others alluded to by him in

[52] நன்னெறிக்கு நன்னெறியாய் நின்றான் றன்னை. 225. 1.

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his songs so that we may conclude who among them must have lived before him.

We have seen before that Appūdi Aḍigaḷ was his contemporary. He is referred to by name in a *padigam*.[52a] In another place, we notice Appar praising Śiva by the name of Rājasimha. He says "I have lovingly gathered to myself the beautiful Rājasimha, the beautiful Nandi of Rāmēśvaram," etc.[53] Here Appar may be referring to the god called Rājasimhēśvara in the temple called Kailāsanātha built by Narasimha Varman II Pallava, *alias* Rājasimha (*C.* 680-700 A.D.)

Caṇḍēśvara Nāyanār is referred to in several places, but one reference is sufficient for our purpose to show that his life-story had come to rank among the Purāṇas during the time of Appar. He said:—"The Lord of Tiruvāppāḍi showed his mercy to Caṇḍiyār who broke the leg of his father when he was disturbed in his worship of the *Sthāvara* (or fixed) form of......Śiva".[54] Similarly Kō-ccengaṇ is also alluded to in numerous places; e.g., "The Lord of Kuṛukkai Vīraṭṭam made the spider of Ānaikkā be born in the Cōḷa dynasty as Kō-ccengaṇ".[55] The same poem has an allusion to Śākkiya Nāyanār of the *Periya*

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[52a] அஞ்சிப்போய்க் கலிமெலிய வழலோம்பு மப்பூதி. Appar 12·10.

[53] எழிலாரி ராஜசிங்கத்தை யிராமேச்சுரத் தெம்மெழிலேற்றை
.....................அன்பிலணைத்து வைத்தேனே. 15. 7.

[54] அண்டமா ரமரர் கோமானுதியெம் மண்ணல்பாதம்
.......................................சாபரத்தைக்
கண்டவன்றாதை பாய்வான் காலற வெறியக்கண்டு
சண்டியார்க் கருள்கள் செய்த தலைவராப்பாடியாரே. 48. 4.

[55] சிலந்தியும்..............இறந்தபோதே கோச்செங்கணுமாக
...............பிறப்பித்திட்டார் குறுக்கை வீரட்டனாரே. 49. 4.

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*Purāṇam.* It says "He (Śiva) made Śākkiyār, who had his porridge (kañji) only after worshipping the god by throwing a stone, give up eating rice got from paddy and rule the great Heavens".[56] The next stanza contains an allusion to Kaṇṇappa Nāyanār,[57] the 9th stanza of the same poem refers to the work of Kaṇampulla Nāyanār.[57a] As was noticed above, the first stanza of *padigam* 56 alludes to Sambandar being given by Śiva 1000 gold pieces.

The belief seems to have prevailed even then that the *pratiṣṭha* of the *liṅga* at Rāmēśvara was the work of Śrī Rāma. The whole of poem 61 alludes to it. Appar describes himself as an old man in one of his songs. He says:—"I do not attempt to get over my *Karma,* to prevent white hair growing on me".[58] The traditional view about Appar is that he lived up to a very old age. According to the *Periya Purāṇam* he did not marry, but we find him saying, in one of his songs "Being immersed in (thoughts about) my children and wife, I do not see God".[59] Possibly he married and had children after

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[56] கல்லினா லெறிந்து கஞ்சிதா முணாஞ்சாக்கியனார்
நெல்லினாற் சோறுணாமே நீள்விசும் பாளவைத்தார். 49. 6.

[57] காட்பதோர் வில்லுமம்புங் கையதோ ரிறைச்சிப்பாரம்
தோற்பெருஞ் செருப்புத்தொட்டுத் தூயவாய்க் கலசமாட்டித்
தீப்பெருங் கண்கள்செய்யக் குருதி நீரொழுகத்தன்கண்
கோப்பதும் பற்றிக்கொண்டார் குறுக்கை வீரட்டனாரே.

[57a] ........................அருந்தவந்த
கணம்புல்லர்க் கருள்கள்செய்து

[58] விளைக்கின்ற வினையைநோக்கி வெண்மயிர் விரவிமேலும்
முளைக்கின்ற வினையைப்போக முயல்கிலேன். 78. 8.

[59] மக்களே மணந்த தாரமவ் வயிற்றவரையோம்பும்
சிக்குளே யழுந்தி யீசன்திறம் படேன். 79. 2.

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he came back to Śaivism. He might have become in the end an out and out ascetic, giving up his *gṛhastha āśrama* (life as house-holder). The story of Amarnīti Nāyanār of the *Periya Purāṇam* is mentioned in one stanza.[60]

In *padigam* 100, Appar alludes to one Bhōga Muni. he says:—"Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā, the moon, the sun and all the Dēvas did penance at your gate to have sight of you, the victor. Bhōga Muni of the slender twisted braid of hair is babbling. What may be your intention, O Ēkamba of the shining braid of hair?".[61] The meaning of this stanza is obscure. The first two lines are clear enough. They allude to the victory of Śiva on the occasion of Dakṣa's sacrifice. All the Devas had to acknowledge Śiva's might and had to experience grief and mortification. But what are we to understand about Bhōga Munivar's babbling? If we can find out who this Muni was, we can make some sense of this stanza. According to South Indian tradition there was one Bhōga Muni, a very great expert in the art of medicine and yōga, and in his name, many unauthenticated medical treatises are still current in the country. We may take

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60 நாட்கொண்ட தாமரைப் பூத்தடஞ்சூழ்ந்த நல்லூரகத்தே
கீட்கொண்ட கோவணங் காவென்று சொல்லிக்கிறிபடத்தான்
வாட்கொண்ட நோக்கி மனைவியோடு மங்கொர் வாணிகனை
ஆட்கொண்ட வார்த்தை யுரைக்குமன்றோ விவ்வகலிடமே. 98. 7.

61 அரியயனிந்திரன் சந்திராதித் தரமரரெல்லாம்
உரியநின் கொற்றக்கடைத் தலையாருணங் காக்கிடந்தார்
புரிதரு புன் சடைப்போக முனிவர் புலம்புகின்றார்
எரிதரு செஞ்சடையே கம்பவென்னே திருக்குறிப்பே. 100, 7.

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it that though the books themselves are spurious, there must have lived a saint who was an authority on medicine. Possibly he lived in the days of Appar in the city of Kāñcī. The *padigam* of Appar, in which the allusion is made, relates to the god of Kāñcī. The story about this Bhōga Munivar is that he was a native of China who came over to South India and studied medicine in different places.[62] That it was not impossible for Chinese travellers to come over to South India from China in these days is evidenced by the fact of Hiuen Tsang's arrival. He lived, as we know, in the days of Appar. It was quite possible therefore that the South Indian tradition about Bhōga Munivar has a historical basis. If more information becomes available about the Chinese travellers and scholars who came to India in those days, it will be possible to investigate this question more satisfactorily. It is very likely that Bhōga Muni was not a Hindu, but a Buddhist. Naturally therefore Appar says 'Bhōga Munivar is babbling'. The idea is that when even such great beings like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and others were forced to acknowledge the greatness of Śiva, this foreigner was speaking words of seeming wisdom (possibly about Buddhism and its superiority).[63]

Appar refers to the Saint Nami Nandi Aḍigaḷ of the *Periya Purāṇam* in the following words "The wide

[62] An oral tradition current among modern Śiva Yogis.

[63] Perhaps the stanza may not mean so much. If the expression 'Bhōga Munivar' merely meant 'Saints enjoying bliss', their 'babbling' may be merely due to their ecstasy. As for the 'slender braid of hair', Munis are quite free to have either slender ones or thick ones.

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world knows how Nambi Nandi lit the temple lamps with water instead of oil''.[64] From this stanza, it is also seen that 'Nami Nandi' is only a corruption of 'Nambi Nandi'.

The song about Tirumāṟpēṟu expresses the local tradition that that was the place where Viṣṇu asked Mahābali Cakravarti to give him land of the extent measured by three steps of Viṣṇu.

Some of the stories of the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* must have become current at the time of Appar, though they might have been grouped into the sixty-four of current tradition only much later. It is there that we get the story that one of the earliest Pāṇḍya kings was Śiva himself. That must account for the fact that Śiva is described by Appar as *'Tennavan'* in *padigam* 135. Appar says:—"He is Tennavan, He is Śiva who rules me",[65] Appar alludes to the destruction of a thousand Jains in the place called Paḻayāṟai.[66] Thus the hostility between the Jains and the Hindus could not but have been very pronounced during Appar's time. One stanza of Appar reveals that the local *purāṇa* about the god of Trichinopoly having become a mother for the benefit of a pregnant woman was widely spread even during his time.[67] Poem No. 209 is entirely

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[64] ... .. .. . ............ .....தொண்டன் நம்பி நந்தி
நீராற்றிரு விளக்கிட்டமை நீணாடறியுமே. 103. 2.

[65] தென்னவ னென்னை யாளுஞ் சிவனவன் 135. 5.

[66] வாயிருந் தமிழே படித்தாளுறா
ஆயிரஞ் சமணும் மழிவாக்கினான். 172. 9.

[67] தாயுமா யெனக்கே தலை கண்ணுமாய்ப்
பேயனேனையு மாண்ட பெருந்தகை
தேயநாதன் சிராப்பள்ளி மேவிய
நாயனார்...................... 199. 10.

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devoted to the Purāṇam about the Śiva Liṅga. Similarly the poem No. 214 gives an account of what the poet calls the Ādi Purāṇam.

We notice that in Appar's *Kṣētrakkōvail-tirut-tāṇḍakam* he mentions Perunduṟai[68] in the 2nd stanza. This raises the very important issue about the date of Māṇikkavāśagar, for according to the account about it, that was the shrine built by him in a place where there was no temple before. If this tradition is true, then certainly Māṇikkavāśagar must have been Appar's contemporary or must have lived before him. The general trend of opinion till now is that Māṇikkavāśagar was later than Appar. We shall enquire into the question later on in greater detail.

In *padigam* 301 Appar says "Śiva is He whose name is borne as an ornament by the kings who rule the world."[69] When Appar speaks of *Nila Vēndar,* we may take it that he refers only to the kings who bore Śiva's name. One of the characteristic names of Śiva was 'Jaṭila' or Śaḍaiya because it has direct reference to the 'Jaṭā' or tuft. But was there a Śaḍaiya contemporary of Appar? Perhaps he was referring to Raṇadhīra,[70] son of Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟa Nāyanār. In that case, Appar must have become very old when Raṇadhīra was king. Again, if we take it that Appar was referring to Pallava kings, we have two Paramēśvaras among them to whom he could have referred.

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[68] Padigam No. 284.

[69] நிலவேந்தர் பரிசாக நினைவுற்றோங்கும் பேரவன்காண். 301. 6.

[70] *Epi. Report*, 1908, p. 66.

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Another interesting detail that we get from Appar is his reference to the Śaṅgam or the Tamil academy; he says "Śiva is He who mounted the Śaṅgam platform as a good poet, and gave the gold purse to Darumi".[71]

The allusion here is to the story of the controversy between the Śaṅgam poet Nakkīrar and God Śiva himself. It is narrated in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam.*[72] Briefly told the story is as follows:—Once a Pāṇḍya king felt that his queen's hair had some kind of natural fragrance. A doubt crossed his mind as to whether human hair could have natural fragrance, or could be rendered fragrant only through art. Keeping this in mind, he went to the Śaṅgam the next day and suspended a bag containing one thousand gold pieces telling the assembled poets that the sum was to be given as a prize to any one who would write a song clearing the doubt he had in his mind. Several attempts were made by several great poets, but none had any bearing upon what the monarch had in his mind. At that time, the temple priest Darumi, who was suffering from extreme poverty, requested god to help him out of his penury so that he might marry and have issue. The god gave him a song and asked him to go to the Śaṅgam with it. The poem was not accepted by the Śaṅgam poets, though the monarch was pleased with it. Nakkīrar said that it contained a flaw. The poor priest did not know what to do, and so he once again appealed

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[71] நன்பாட்டுப் புலவனாய்ச் சங்கமேறி நற்கனகக்கிழி தருமிக்
கருளினான்காண். 290. 3.

[72] Chapters 16 and 17 of Mahāmahōpadhyāya Swāminātha Iyer's Edition.

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to God Śiva who thereupon went to the Śaṅgam, and cursed Nakkīrar for his conceit. Nakkīrar was almost burnt up with the heat of Śiva's third eye and he jumped into the lotus tank. Darumi got the purse. The poet Nakkīrar, also, was later on pardoned.

The song that was the subject-matter of all that controversy is stated in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* to begin with the words 'Koṅgu tērvāḻkkai'. That stanza is found grouped in the Śaṅgam work called *Kuṟundogai*, and it is stated that the author was Iṟaiyanār. Now 'Iṟaiyanār' is the name applied by the Tamil scholars of the early centuries to God Śiva (cf. Iṟaiyanār Agapporuḷ). The stanza means:—"O! fair-winged bee, you spend your time gathering flower-dust! Do not speak out of love, but speak out the truth. Is there any among the flowers known to you that is more fragrant than the hair of this damsel who is most loving, is of the colour of the peacock and has beautiful rows of teeth?"[73]

So far as our present purpose is concerned, we have merely to note that some of the stories of the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal-purāṇam* had already become widely current in the country during the time of Appar.

In the poem called *Aḍaivu Tiruttāṇḍagam*,[74] Appar gives an account of several temples in the Tamil

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[73] கொங்கு தேர் வாழ்க்கையஞ் சிறைத்தும்பி
காமஞ் செப்பாது கண்டது மொழிமோ
பயிலியது கெழீஇய நட்பின் மயிலியற்
செறியெ யிற்ற ரிவை கூந்தலி
னறியவு முளவோ நீயறி யும்பூவே. Kuṟundogai, St. 2.

[74] Padigam 285.

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country. He divides them into several groups according to their names. In the first stanza he speaks of the *Paḷḷis,* in the second, of the *Vīraṭṭānams,* in the third, of the *Kuḍis,* in the fourth of the *Ūrs,* and in the fifth of the *Kōyils.* In speaking of the *kōyils,* he speaks of the '*Peruṅgōyil* seventy and eight'. There he seems to be referring to the seventy and odd temples erected, according to the *Periyatirumoḻi* by Kō-ccengaṇ.[75] It is to be remembered that all the temples built by Kō-ccengaṇ were built of brick, and not of stone. In the 6th stanza, Appar speaks of the *Kāḍus,* in the 7th of the *Vāyils,* in the 8th of the *Śurams,* in the 9th of the *Malais,* in the 10th of the *Kuḷams* and *Kaḷams,* and in the 11th of the *Tuṟais.* Once again, there is a mention of Perunduṟai, the place of importance in connection with Māṇikkavāśagar.

Let us now pass on to the investigation of Māṇikkavāśagar's date.

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[75] Periya Tirumoḻi VI, 6. 8.

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# CHAPTER XII.

## MĀṆIKKAVĀŚAGAR.

### i. *The Date of Māṇikkavāśagar.*

Māṇikkavāśagar, the author of the *Tiruvāśagam,* is one of the four *Samayācāryas,* the others being Sambandar, Sundarar and Appar. The date of this saint is very much disputed, but at present the theory prevails that he came after Sundarar who is believed to be of the eighth century A.D. He is therefore assigned to the ninth century A.D. But I do not find it possible to accept this conclusion, and so I shall re-examine the whole position.

The reasons leading to the view that Māṇikkavāśagar came after Sundaramūrti have all been thoroughly stated by the late Mr. Srinivasa Pillai, the author of the *Tamiḻ Varalāṟu.* So, the best way of approaching the problem is to take up his line of argument for careful scrutiny.

First he gives reasons to prove that Māṇikkavāśagar could not have lived in the days of the Śaṅgam. He rightly states that if the saint lived in that age, his name ought to have been mentioned along with the several Śaṅgam poets. That is not found to be the case. He also points out that Nakkīrar was the chief of the poets of the Śaṅgam age. The *Tiruviḷaiyāḍaḷ Purāṇam* of Parañjōti Munivar says that the Pāṇḍya king of the time of Nakkīrar was Śeṇbaga Māṟan. Māṇikkavāśagar's contemporary king, according to the same

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authority was Arimardana Pāṇḍyan. The latter was the 16th in descent from Śeṇbaga Māṟan.[1] Thus, if the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* is true, Nakkirār lived sixteen generations before Māṇikkavāśagar. Here Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai has accepted the story of the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* for chronological purposes; but he has not done that fully. If we allow roughly twenty-five years for each generation of Pāṇḍya kings, we get 16×25 or nearly four hundred years as the interval between Nakkīrar and Māṇikkavāśagar. Knowing as we do that Nakkīrar was the contemporary of Talaiyālaṅgā-nattuppāṇḍyan, whom Dr. S. K. Aiyangār has placed about the close of the second century A.D., we can see that Māṇikkavāśagar must have, by this calculation, lived about the close of the sixth century A. D., or the beginning of the seventh. That means that he must have been the contemporary of Appar and Sambandar. This point has not been touched upon by Mr. Srinivasa Pillai. He has contented himself with merely stating that Māṇikkavāśagar could not have lived in the time of the Śaṅgam and to that extent he is correct.

Next, Mr. Pillai examines the question as to whether Māṇikkavāśagar lived after, or before, the *Tēvāram* hymners. He gives several arguments to establish his conclusion that Māṇikkavāśagar was later in point of time. In the beginning, he attacks all his opponents' arguments which go to prove that Māṇikka-vāśagar lived before the three others. We shall follow his statements and criticisms one after another.

[1]Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai, *Tamiḻ Varalāṟu*, p. 68.

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*Arguments to show that Māṇikkavāśagar was earlier.*—(1) In Sundaramūrti's *Tiruttoṇḍa-ttogai,* there is the expression '*Poyyaḍimai Illāda pulavar*' which may be taken to refer to Māṇikkavāśagar. The meaning of the expression is "The poet (or poets) who is (or are) no false servant (or servants) of God". Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai objects to taking this expression as referring to Māṇikkavāśagar. He is right in stating that this could not be taken to be proof of Māṇikkavāśagar's living before Sundarar. The expression is ambiguous. It may apply to one individual or to many individuals. Very probably it refers to many. Mr. Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai states that it was the Śaṅgam poets that are thus referred to. He gives valid reasons in support of his view by citing some stanzas from Nambi Aṇḍār Nambi and the *Periya Purāṇam*. We must acknowledge the force of his argument. It is quite probable that Sundaramūrti did not think of Māṇikkavāśagar when he wrote this line.

2. Appar says in one of his *padigams* "The Kuḍa Muḷa Nandi was made Vāśaka by Śiva."[2] Mr. Pillai says that this expression Vāśaka does not mean Māṇikkavāśagar and adduces various kinds of arguments to prove his contention.[3] So much of reasoning does not seem to be necessary. He is right in his condemnation. The object of Appar seems to be merely to say that on one occasion he made Nandi play upon the musical instrument called

[2] குடமுழ நந்திசனை வாசகனுகக் கொண்டாய். 310. 11.

[3] Srinivāsa Piḷḷai, pp. 71-79.

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the 'Kuḍa muḻā'. There are several stories about Śiva, and it is just likely that Nandi had this function to discharge on one occasion. This reference by Appar cannot be taken to support the theory that Māṇikkavāśagar lived before Appar.

3. In the *padigam* by Appar on Tiruvārūr, the saint speaks of Śiva as "He who can convert jackals into horses".[4] This is clearly a reference to the one most prominent incident in the life of Māṇikkavāśagar. Mr. Piḷḷai states that Appar was merely stating that god Śiva was capable of doing all kinds of miracles. This is a very unsatisfactory explanation. The argument loses much of its force if we say that a general meaning is conveyed when a particular statement is made. If Appar wanted to say something in general terms, he could have done so as he actually does, when he says that Śiva was capable of transforming the men of hell into Gods, the dwellers of Svarga. Here, on the other hand, he does refer to one occasion when Śiva converted *jackals* into *horses.* If we can point to a story other than that of Māṇikkavāśagar, where such a miracle was effected, we may say that Appar might have referred to that. But strangely enough, in the whole of the Śaiva tradition there is only this single instance when Śiva converts jackals into horses. It is obvious, therefore, that Mr. Piḷḷai here

[4] நரியைக் குதிரைசெய்வானு நரகரைத் தேவுசெய்வானும்
விரதங்கொண்டாட வல்லானும் விச்சின்றி நாறுசெய்வானும்
முரசதிர்ந்தானை முன்னோட முன்பணிந் தன்பர்களேத்த
அரவரைச் சாத்திநின்றானு மாரூரமர்ந்த வம்மானே. Appar, 4. 2.



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vainly attempts to get over a real difficulty. Let us see how he tries to get over it. He says 'If Appar refers to Māṇikkavāśagar's incident, what are the other stories referred to by the other statements made by Appar in the verse?" But feeling that this is a foolish question, he abruptly says "There are also people who explain that each one of these alludes to a story. Their explanation only provokes laughter". This is nothing but an acknowledgment that he has no argument of his own. If stories are cited explaining the allusions, what more is needed? Then he seeks refuge in Tamil grammar. He says "Instead of saying 'He *made* jackals into horses etc.', Appar says 'He is capable of making jackals into horses, etc.'. So it is clear that he is not stating what actually took place, and that Appar hereby wanted only to show the several miracles that Śiva is capable of doing." Mr. Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai ignores here the fact that Appar frequently uses this style of expression in various other places to allude to past events, e.g. when alluding to Śiva's dance in which he destroyed the anger of Kāḷi.[5]

Then Mr. Pillai says: "If Appar wanted to allude to Māṇikkavāśagar, why could he not mention him by name?" This is to assume that whenever any allusion is made, the name also should be mentioned. Does Appar refer to Amarnīti Nāyanār by name when he alludes to him in 98.7?

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[5] பைதற்பிணக் குழைக்காளி வெங்கோபம் பங்கப்படுப்பான்.
Padigam 101. 2.

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The remaining portion of the argument by Mr. Pillai on this point is similar. Out of respect for the reader's patience, I do not proceed further. It is enough to state that hitherto none has satisfactorily explained away Appar's allusion to this incident. We have therefore to bear this in mind when we fix Māṇikkavāśagar's date.

4. Next Mr. Pillai proceeds to state that the expression 'Maṅgalavāśakar' appearing in Appar's *padigam* on Tiruviśaiyamaṅgai, cannot refer to Māṇikkavāśagar. Very probably he is right. But it would have been better if Mr. Pillai had given his own interpretation of this obscure stanza. 'Maṅgala Vāśakar' may be explained as 'those who speak words of auspiciousness', and so may be made to apply to all those who chanted hymns, or sang songs in honour of god. Appar has described these singers as having in their hands '*Kuśai*' and '*Kōśam*'.[6] Now, '*Kuśai*' may mean the *darbha* (Bot. *Poa Cynosuroides*) grass. '*Kōśam*' may be taken to mean a 'hymn-book'.

Then Mr. Piḷḷai notices a few more possible objections to his view, and proceeds to give a lengthy condemnation of the authenticity of the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* and the comparatively superior historical value that ought to be attached to the *Periya Purāṇam*.[7]

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[6] குசையு மங்கையிற் கோசமுங் கொண்டவவ்
வசையின் மங்கல வாசகர் வாழ்த்தவே. 185. 1.

[7] Mr, Piḷḷai, pp. 81-96.

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All that is beside the point for our present purpose. Let us now see his chief constructive arguments.

First he says that the *Tiruvāśagam* of Māṇikkar is the 8th of the *Tirumuṟais,* the first seven being the Tēvārams of Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar. Again, the practice in the Tamil country is, (he says), to sing the *Tiruvāśagam* last i.e. only after the *Tēvārams* are sung. So, it is possible that from the beginning the Tamils knew that Māṇikkavāśagar came last.

In reply to the above, it must be stated that this does not seem to be a proper way of ascertaining the chronology of these four *Samayācāryas.* We can never be sure that chronology was in the minds of those who established the practice of reciting texts from the sacred writings. If so, Appar was the earliest of the four, and the first few *Tirumuṟais* must have been his. On the other hand, we find him placed after Sambandar.

2. Then Mr. Pillai says that because Māṇikkavāśagar was not mentioned by Sundaramūrti along with the other *Toṇḍar* in the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai,* Sundarar must have preceded Māṇikkar. The point to be noticed here is that there is no warrant in assuming that Sundarar made an exhaustive list of all the *Toṇḍar,* etc. whose lives were known to him. He does not say so in any place. He just gave out the names of some as examples of true *Bhaktas.* This will be clear if we analyse the list. For instance, we find Sundarar including the names of his father Saḍaiya Nāyanār and his mother Iśai Gñāniyār. Why was not the name of Sambandar's father included although it is

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well known that the pious soul was carrying his inspired son on his shoulders from temple to temple till the pearl palanquin was given by God? Again, why should poor Tilakavatiyār, Appar's sister, and, in fact *Guru,* be left out? Likewise, Cēramān Perumāḷ's father could have been included also, for the *Periya Purāṇam* says that he was also a saint. If Śiṟuttoṇḍar was a saint his wife was equally a saint, for did she not hold the boy Śīrāḷa, and willingly consent to the cooking of her son? Was Iḷaiyān Kuḍi Māṟa Nāyanār's wife, who counselled the gathering of the paddy already sown in the fields, less of a saint than her husband? If it is objected that the wife need not be separately mentioned when the husband was mentioned, Maṅgayarkaraśiyār, the queen of Ninṟa Śīr Neḍu Māṟa Nāyanār need not have been specially mentioned. The real fact to be borne in mind is that Sundarar did not pretend to give exhaustively a list of all these saints. Surely, there were several more. Śēkkiḻār attached very great importance to the words of the *Tirutoṇḍattogai,* and wrote out a history of those who were mentioned in that *padigam,* and omitted the rest. No more importance than this should be attached to the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai* as an exhaustive list of devotees. That poem was one like the *padigams* of Sundarar (and others) on the shrines. Can anyone say that there were not in the Tamil country more shrines known to the Tēvāram hymners than those mentioned in Sundarar's *Ūrttogai* or list of towns? In that poem we do not have a mention of Madura or Shiyali. Are we to say therefore that Sundarar either did not know of them or had no respect for them? Such

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an argument by Mr. Piḷḷai, therefore, is not valid and does not help him very far.

Another argument of Mr. Pillai has made a great appeal to scholars, and that has been at present taken to be proof positive of Māṇikkavāśagar having lived in the ninth century A.D. This argument is based upon two stanzas of Māṇikkavāśagar appearing in his *Tirukkōvaiyār* where the name Varaguṇa appears. The stanzas are as follow:—

"Though it advances against the enemy's army, the car of him who is like a lion will not stay in a strange place. He of Cidambaram, *who is praised by the Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa,* is the oldest of all the Dēvas. His consort similarly has not any other god before her".[8]

"To-day, His (Śiva's) face appears beautiful after destroying the great wall (of the three cities). It shows His great wrath through the eye (of the forehead) which resembles the fish (flag) planted on the mountain (the Himālayas), by the lord of black, tall, furious elephants, Varaguṇa, who praises Cidambaram, (the seat) of Him, (Śiva) who wears in His braid the waters of the Ganges."[9]

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[8] மன்னவன் றெம்முனைமேற் செல்லுமாயினு மாலரியே
றன்னவன்றேர் புறத்தல்கல் செல்லாது வரகுணனுந்
தென்னவனேத்து சிற்றம்பலத்தான் மற்றைத் தேவர்க்கெல்லா
முன்னவன் மூவலன்னாளு மற்றோர் தெய்வமுன்னலளே.
*Tirukkōvaiyār*, 306.

[9] புயலோங்கலர் சடையேற்றவன் சிற்றம்பலம் புகழு
மயலோங்கிருங் களியானை வரகுணன்வெற் பின்வைத்த
கயலோங்கிருஞ் சிலைகொண்டு மன்கோபமுங் காட்டிவருஞ்
செயலோங் கெயிலெரிசெய்த பினின்றோர் திருமுகமே. *ibid.* 327.

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The construction of the stanza is complicated, yet it is clear that Varaguṇa is described as having planted the fish emblem of the Pāṇḍyas on the high mountains, (the Himālayas). Again, we find that Māṇikkavāśagar is here linking up the name of the Pāṇḍya king, Varaguṇa, with Cidambaram, the Cōḷa capital. Thus it might mean that, at the time Māṇikkavāśagar wrote, the Cōḷa capital was under the control of the Pāṇḍyas. There might have been a Cōḷa on the Cōḷa throne; but, it is clear that the Cōḷa was a less powerful ruler than the Pāṇḍya. We may also infer that Varaguṇa had some claim upon the Cōḷa throne also. These are matters which call for investigation. But before proceeding upon that task, let us see what Mr. Pillai makes of this reference to Varaguṇa. He concludes rather abruptly that this Varaguṇa was none other than the Varaguṇa of A.D.862-863.[10] He also infers that the Varaguṇa praised by Paṭṭinattu Piḷḷaiyār was the same person of A.D. 862-863. Likewise, he identifies that Pāṇḍya with the Varaguṇa praised by Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi.[11] Mr. Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai believes that it is the same person who is mentioned in two chapters of the *Tiruviḷayāḍal Purāṇam*. Hence, it is clear that in the opinion of Mr. Piḷḷai, there was only one Varaguṇa Pāṇḍya who deserved all these praises by Śaiva poets, and that the Varaguṇa in question was none other than the Varaguṇa of A.D. 862-863 mentioned in the Śinnamanūr plates. Let us examine this point critically.

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[10] *Annual Report, Epigraphy,* 1908, pp. 66.

[11] Srīnivāsa Piḷḷai, pp. 181-183.

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First, as regards the allusion to Varaguṇa Dēvar in Paṭṭinattup Piḷḷai's song on Tiruviḍai-Marudūr, it is very doubtful if the poet alludes to the Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa who got over his curse (according to the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam*) by seeing Śiva in that shrine; for the poet's words have nothing to indicate that incident. He says: "With the determination of giving god what He asked for, Varaguṇa Dēva, in his great love, gave with devotion, the beautiful Dēvi (his wife)."[12] We do not have it stated anywhere in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* that Varaguṇa Pāṇḍya gave his wife to God Śiva. On the other hand, we have a story to that effect in the *Periya Purāṇam* about a saint called Iyaṟpagai Nāyanār, a Vaiśya of Kāvērippūmpaṭṭinam. If Paṭṭinattār (of the same place) was referring to that incident, the inference would be that the real name of Iyaṟpagai was Varaguṇa Dēva. Thus this Varaguṇa Dēva would have nothing to do with Varaguṇa Pāṇḍya.

As regards Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi's allusion, stanza 62 of his *Kōyil Tiruppaṇṇiyār Viruttam* has the name Varaguṇa. Its meaning is "the feet of the Dancer at Cidambaram are on the head of Varaguṇa, who went to the battle-field wearing sacred ashes and finding that the enemy's arrows were piercing his feet, said 'let the arrows pierce these feet (of mine) which do

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[12] விரும்பின கொடுக்கை பரம் பரற்கென்று
புரிகுழற் றேவியைப் பரிவுடன் கொடுத்த
பெரியவன் பின் வரகுண தேவரும்.

Paṭṭinattār Mummaṇikkōvai, St. 28.

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not have sacred ashes on them."[13] From this allusion we find that the Varaguṇa, evidently a king, was a *Śiva Bhakta*. But how are we to say that he was the Varaguṇa who got over his curse? Even if he was, how are we to say that he was Varaguṇa of A.D. 862?

It is to be noted here that Mr. Pillai has failed to notice that Māṇikkavāśagar has referred to another Pāṇḍya king whose name appears in the Pāṇḍya charters. He says in his *Pōṟṟittiruvagaval* : "Praise Arikēsari of great learning."[13a] Thus in discussing the date of Māṇikkavāśagar, we must take notice of both these names—Arikēsari and Varaguṇa.

Mr. Pillai says that Māṇikkavāśagar alludes to Varaguṇa when he says in the *Pōṟṟittiruvagaval* "O (Śiva) who gave the upward path to the Pāṇḍya, and prevented him from going to hell or heaven or this world".[14] There is nothing to show that the reference is to Varaguṇa. It would apply equally appropriately to Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan who was Arikēsari by name.

Yet another argument brought forward by Mr. Piḷḷai, is that Māṇikkavāśagar knew the Māyāvādam or Ēkātma Vāda, which according to him, was not prevalent in the Tamil country before the ninth

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[13] பொடியேர் தருமேனி யணுகிப்பூசல் புகவடிக்கே
கடிசேர் கணைகுளிப்பக் கண்டு கோயிற்கருவியில்லா
வடியே படவமையுங் கணையென்ற வரகுணன்றன்
முடியே தருகழலம் பலத்தாடிதன் மொய்கழலே.
Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi; Kōil Tiru-Paṇṇiyār Viruttam, St. 62.

[13a] கலையாரரிகேசரியாய்போற்றி.

[14] நரகொடு சுவர்க்கம் நானிலம் புகாமல்
பரகதி பாண்டியற் கருளினை போற்றி.



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century. He says that this doctrine flourished only after the days of Śaṅkara (whom he dates in the ninth century), and that Sambandar and Appar did not know it. Māṇikkavāśagar refers in the *Pōṟṟittiruvagaval* to the storm of Māyā Vāda raging in the country.[15] This argument was advanced by the learned Mr. Piḷḷai in a moment of carelessness. Appar says in *padigam* 31 "I am not capable of knowing Māyā, etc."[16] Again in *padigam* 170. 4 he says "Leaving all Māyā and removing darkness etc."[16a] It is difficult to think of a time when the doctrine of Māyā was not known in the Tamil country.[17]

Equally wrong is his theory that the *Āgamas* were not known in the Tamil country before the days of the Santānācāryas. The Ādi Śaivas were people who were expected to have a knowledge of the Tamil *Āgamas*. They were mostly the *Pūjakas* of the temples. If then Mr. Piḷḷai could prove that there was no temple-worship in the Tamil country before Māṇikkavāśagar, he could say that before Māṇikkavāśagar's time, the *Āgamas* had not spread in the country. There are a few more similar arguments which may be dismissed as being unworthy of serious refutation.

Now let us proceed to arrive at our conclusion about Māṇikkavāśagar's date. We have noticed above

[15] மிண்டிய மாயாவாத மென்னுஞ்
சண்ட மாருதஞ் சுழித்தடித்து. p. 103.

[16] மாயத்தை யறியமாட்டேன் மையல்சொண் மனத்தனுகி 31. 7.

[16a] மாயமெல்லாமுற்றவிட்டிருணீங்க

[17] Mr. Piḷḷai, pp. 104. 5.

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that the poet refers to a Varaguṇa, and also to an Arikēsari. It is quite possible for a poet to refer to a king without being his contemporary. But, investigators usually proceed on the assumption that, other circumstances favouring, such references may be to contemporary monarchs. If so, Māṇikkavāśagar might have been the contemporary of a Varaguṇa and also of an Arikēsari. The *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* also states that the saint was a minister of one Arimardana Pāṇḍya.[18] His name is obviously a title meaning 'one who (crushes) overthrows enemies.'

When we turn to the Vēḷvikkuḍi plates we find that there was a period of the Kaḷabhra interregnum. That was the time when much confusion prevailed in the country, and the Śaṅgam and its good work were somewhat unsettled. This is seen from the fact that the Śaṅgam literature is at best a piece of mutilated literature. Several songs of the *Paripāḍal* are lost. The kings in whose times the collections were made are not known. We hear of one Pūrikko as the king who grouped the *Kuṟundogai*. Who he was and when he lived, it is impossible to say. If the Pāṇḍya rule had been continuous and undisturbed, there would have been no difficulty in obtaining these details. The date assigned by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar to the days of the Śaṅgam greatness admirably fits in with our hypothesis. Relying upon the Gajabāhu synchronism, he holds the view that the close of the 2nd century A.D. (roughly 200 A.D.) marks the days of Nakkīrar and others.

[18] இத்தகையோர் நிகழ்செய்தி யறிந்தவர் சென்றியம்ப வரி
மர்த்தன பாண்டியன் கேட்டு வரவழைத்து Parañjōti, 68. 6.

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Assigning twenty-five years on the average to fifteen Pāṇḍya monarchs of the Kaḷabhra period, we have to add about 350 years or more. Assuming that Kaḍungōn came to the throne about 550 A.D. his son Māṟa Varman could have mounted the throne in 575 A.D.; Śeḻiyan Śēndan in 600, and Sambandar's contemporary Arikēsari, victor of Nelvēli in roughly 625 A.D. That fits in with the date arrived at for him through the synchronism of the war against Vātāpi.

Now if we examine the Śinnamanūr plates, we can gain some support for our conclusions. The earlier lines of the Tamil verses mention many achievements of the different Pāṇḍyas, some of which are mentioned in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam*. Lines 89 and 90 speak of depriving Indra of his necklace. This is the story of the 14th *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal*. Lines 97 and 98 allude to the carving of the fish, tiger and bow emblems on the Himālayas; this is mentioned in the 15th Tiruviḷaiyāḍal. Line 91 speaks of throwing the javelin or the spear into the sea. This is the story of the 13th Tiruviḷaiyāḍal. All these and many more are said to have been accomplished before the victory at Talaiyālangānam. That battle is mentioned in line 100. The description given there corresponds to the description of the same in Śaṅgam literature in the allusion to the death of both the Cēra and the Cōḷa kings. The next achievement spoken of is the translating of Mahābhāratam into Tamil. When we remember that the *Kāppu* verses, or the propitiatory verses of the *Aham*, the *Puṟam* and the *Kuṟundogai* are written by a poet who is called Bāratam-pāḍiya Perumdēvanār,

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it is clear that this poet lived to write them after the battle of Talaiyālaṅgānam, and that these books at least were compiled immediately after Talaiyālaṅgānattup-Pāṇḍyan. Next comes, in lines 102 and 103, the establishment of the Śaṅgam in Madura. Thus it is seen that the Śaṅgam was established after the Bhāratam was rendered into Tamil. Most probably that happened at the time that the Śaṅgam was established, and the old works were collected and given the hall-mark of the Śaṅgam. Then there is the line stating that Mahārājas and Sārva Bhaumas ruled over the world and died.[19] This shows that there were some great kings, evidently the Pāṇḍyas, who ruled over 'the earth' for some time. The Śinnamanūr plates do not mention any of their achievements because that was the period of the Kaḷabhra interregnum and nothing was definitely known about what happened at that time. Then abruptly the plate passes on to speak of Arikēsari who won the battle of Nelvēli. That was Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan.

Thus we see from the above that the order of events was this:—(1) The battle of Talaiyālaṅgānam; (2) the establishment of the Śaṅgam; and the translation of the Bhāratam into Tamil; (3) The Kaḷabhra interregnum when Mahārājas and Sārvabhaumas ruled and died; (4) the rise of the new Pāṇḍyas, one of whom was Arikēsari who won the battle of Nelvēli. As already noticed, Nakkīrar sang of the battle of Talaiyālaṅgānam and was one of the Śaṅgam poets.

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19 மகாராஜரும் ஸார்வபௌமரும் மஹீமண்டலங் காத்திசந்தபின் lines 102, 103.

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If we examine the relevant details available in the 31st Tiruviḷaiyāḍal, we see that at the time of a Pāṇḍya Kula-Bhūṣaṇa, there was a great famine for want of rain and people suffered very much. The king distributed much gold, but his treasures got exhausted thereby. Then god appeared before him in the form of a religious devotee and gave him an inexhaustible purse. The king ornamented the temple, and gave large presents to the Brahmans. The account runs as follows:—"With the gold which grew without limit, he covered both the inside and the outside of the temple tall enough to tear the sky, and made the six-footed pedestal, the *lofty flag-staff* and the high gate".[20] It is this that, I believe, is alluded to in lines 99 and 100 of the Śinnamanūr plates. The inscription runs thus:—"Aḍumpaśi nōy nāḍakaṟṟi amboṟ citram uyariyum" which means "(who) removed the killing famine from the land, and raised the beautiful gold flag-staff." Now, *Citram* means several things. Because we have the word *uyari* 'raised', we must interpret the gold ornamentation (*Citram*) to mean the gold flag-staff, or the gold covered *gōpuram*. In any case, the inscription unmistakably refers to this incident mentioned in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal* in connection with Kula Bhūṣaṇa.

This incident of raising the gold-flag (or tower) is stated in the inscription along with the victory of Talaiyālaṅgānam, and we may therefore infer that

[20] ஆயபொதியில் விளைபொன்னால சும்புசெய்து விசும்பிழிந்த
கோயிலதனை யகம்புறமுங் குயின்று ஞானக்கொழுந்தனைய
தாயிலறு காற்பீடிகை வான்றடவு கொடியுநெடியபெரு
வாயில்பிறவு மழகெழிப்ப வேய்ந்தான் மறையின் வரம்பறிந்தான்.

*Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam*, XXXI, 17.

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Kula Bhūṣaṇa was only another name for Talaiyālaṅgā-nattu Neḍuñjeḻiyan.

Examining the inscription still further, we see that his predecessor is spoken of as having carved the fish, tiger and bow emblems on the Himālayas. The text runs "Vēndaḻiya Śuram pōkkiyum vaśaiyil *mākayal puli śilai* vaḍa varai neṟṟiyil varaindum" (lines 98–99). We have seen before that Māṇikka-vāśagar attributes this achievement to one whom he calls Varaguṇa. The *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* says that Kula Bhūṣaṇa's father was Anantaguṇa (29th Tiru. St. 38). It appears very likely therefore that Varaguṇa and Anantaguṇa refer to the same individual. The text of the inscription mentions the carving of the emblems on the northern mountain after defeating several monarchs. We know that the *Śilappadikāram* mentions one Pāṇḍya king as having undertaken an expedition to the Himālayas.[21] It must have been on that occasion that this carving of the emblems was effected. We know that the *Śilappa-dikāram* is intended partly to glorify the achievements of Śenguṭṭuvan, and so we may infer that this achievement of the Pāṇḍya king should have taken place before the days of Śēran Śeṅguṭṭuvan, or when Śeṅguṭṭuvan was very young, that is, before he himself went to the north for bringing the stone for erecting the image of Pattini. Śeṅguṭṭuvan had ruled for more than forty-five years when he went north. This is seen

[21] வடதிசைக் கங்கையு மிமயமுங்கொண்டு
தென்றிசை யாண்ட தென்னன்வாழி.
Śilap. 10. 21.-22,

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from a statement made by Māḍala Maṟaiyōn to Śeṅguṭṭuvan,[22] that the king had then ruled for fifty years. Even before that the calamity had happened in Madura, the great Pāṇḍya Neḍunjeḻiyan had gone, and the young successor called alternatively Veṟṟivēl Śeḻiyan and Iḷaṅgōc Ceḻiyan[23] had performed sacrifices including the sacrifice of goldsmiths. I take it that it was this Veṟṟi Vēl Śeḻiyan that established the Śaṅgam also.

In this connection, we have to take notice of a small reference in the commentary on the *Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ* where the manner in which the commentary on the Kaḷaviyal was obtained is stated. In the *Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ*,[24] it is stated that "at that time (i.e. in some reign before that of Ugrapperuvaḻudi) there was a great famine which lasted for twelve years. Then the king called upon all the poets to go where they could. Afterwards, when the country was restored to prosperity, the king called the people to assemble together". Then it was that Nakkīrar's commentary was accepted by the dumb child, viz. Uppūrikkuḍi Kiḻar's son Rudra Śarman.[25] The monarch who thus invited the poets once again should have been the contemporary of Nakkīrar. Nakkīrar himself should have known Talaiyālaṅgānattu Pāṇḍya. Thus this Ugrapperuvaḻudi (who is credited with compiling the *Aha-nānūṟu*

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[22] வையங் காவல்பூண்ட நின்னல்யாண்
டையைந் திரட்டிச் சென்றது. [22]28th Chapter, line 130.

[23]Silap. 27th line 127 and footnote.

[24]Edited by Diwan Bahadur S. Bhavānandam Piḷḷai, p. 8.

[25]*ibid.*, p. 11,

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must have been the immediate successor of Talaiyālaṅgānattup-Pāṇḍya. The famine alluded to must have been the distress experienced in Madura after the destruction of the city in the days of the Pāṇḍya contemporary of Kōvalan (most probably Talaiyālanganattup-Pāṇḍya himself). Thus Ugrapperuvaḻudi could very well have been Śēran Śenguttuvan's later contemporary, or the Veṟṟi Vēl Śeḻiyan or the Iḷaṅgō Śeḻiyan alluded to above. We know that the poet who sang of Śēran Śeṅguṭṭuvan in the *Padiṟṟuppattu* was Paraṇar. He was, it is seen from the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam,* the friend of Nakkīrar, because he interceded on the latter's behalf when Śiva was about to open his third eye and destroy Nakkīrar. Thus the days of Śēran Śeṅguṭṭuvan were the days when the Tamil Śaṅgam was established in Madura. This is also the conclusion arrived at by Dr. S. K. Aiyangār on other grounds.

Thus we see that all the various details agree in enabling us to conclude that the information from the Śinnamanūr plates about the earlier achievements of the Pāṇḍyas, and that from the Vēḷvikkuḍi plates about the Kaḷabhra interregnum, are based on historical facts which appear to assume a legendary garb in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam.*

But the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* evidently makes some unpardonable blunders. As noticed above, Kulēśa the 15th in succession from Vamśa Śēkhara Pāṇḍya is made the contemporary of Kapilar and Paraṇar who lived in the second century A.D. Similarly it states



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that the minstrel Pattiran brought the letter (or Tirumugam) from the god of Madura in the reign of Varaguṇa. From the *Periya Purāṇam* we know that the Cēra to whom the letter was sent was Cēramān Perumāḷ, the bosom friend of Sundarar. Yet, the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* makes this Varaguṇa anterior to Kīrti Bhūṣaṇa by 23 reigns, and Kīrti Bhūṣaṇa himself anterior to Sambandar's king by about twenty-five years. This is manifestly absurd since Sambandar could not, in that case, have been alluded to by Sundarar in his *Tiruttoṇḍattogai*. Thus, we have to be very careful in accepting the names of the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Puranam,* though we may believe that many of its incidents are historical in character.

Thus, it becomes necessary for us to discover who the Arimardana of the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* is. He is spoken of as the son of Kulēśa who was the last of the kings whom we have placed in the period of the Kaḷabhra interregnum. So, we are easily tempted to equate Arimardana with Kaḍungōn Pāṇḍyādhirāja. But we have no evidence whatever for doing so. We know that Māṇikkavāśagar himself names two kings Arikēsari and Varaguṇa. Thus, even supposing that Kaḍungōn had the alternative name of Varaguṇa, we have no evidence to suppose that his son had the name Arikēsari. From the Epigraphist's report, we see that Kaḍungōn's son is called Adhirāja Māṟavarman. On the other hand, we notice the name Arikēsari applied to two kings, one of whom was Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan, and the other was his grandson.

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Between the two comes Kōc-Caḍaiyan Raṇadhīra. If we suppose that this Kōc-Caḍaiyan had the name of Varaguṇa and if Māṇikkavāśagar was his contemporary, he could have alluded to the father of Raṇadhīra or his son. Hence, we have to examine the possibility of Māṇikkavāśagar being Raṇadhīra's contemporary. The detail about Raṇadhīra observable from the charters is that he fixed the fish, tiger and the bow emblems on the Himālayas. Māṇikkavāśagar speaks only of this detail in the one stanza where he refers to that monarch. That appears to be a conclusive piece of evidence so far. But by stating that Māṇikkavāśagar was his contemporary, we have to face another problem. This Raṇadhīra came after Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan who was Appar's and Sambandar's contemporary. So how could Appar have alluded to Māṇikkavāśagar's story of the conversion of jackals into horses? In answering this, we have to enquire into the question of whether it was possible for Appar to have lived long enough to know of it. It is here that, we must take notice of a very old stanza believed to be true by the Śaivas of the Tamil land. The stanza gives the respective ages of the four Samayācāryas. It runs thus:—"Appar lived 81 years; Vādavūrar (Māṇikkavāśagar) lived 32 years; Sundarar lived 18 years; and Sambandar lived 16 years." [26] If we bear this stanza in mind, we can see that all the events

[26] அப்பருக் கெண்பத்தொன் றருள்வாத வூரருக்குச்
செப்பிய நாலெட்டிற் றெய்வீகம்—இப்புவியிற்
சுந்தரர்க்கு மூவாறு ஞானசம்பந் தர்க்
கந்தம் பதினாறறி.
Introduction to Śaiva Siddhānta Society's edition of Tiruvāśagam, p. 11.

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relating to Sambandar, Appar and Māṇikkavāśagar can be rationally explained and dated.

The miracle about Māṇikkavāśagar according to *Vādavūrar Purāṇam* is as follows:—"When the youth was 16 years old, Māṇikkavāśagar was called upon by the Pāṇḍya to become his chief minister."[27] The Pāṇḍya who offered this position is stated to be Māṟa. He was, (as we shall later on discover), Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan in his last years. When Māṇikkavāśagar was carrying on the administration to everyone's satisfaction, the king entrusted him with a commission to purchase horses for the state and for that purpose the king gave him a very large sum of money. The minister went on his mission, but, because he had even before this begun to feel a strong desire to see a *Guru* who would initiate him in the true knowledge of Śaivism, he forgot himself entirely at Tirupperunduṟai where he saw God approaching him in the garb of a Guru with the book *Śiva Gñāna Bōdham* in his hand. Thinking no more of the kingdom, he spent away all the money he had

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[27] மிக்கலையும் செழுநீரு மதிக்கலையும் மிலைக்குமவ
ரக்கலையுந் தோள்புரிய தட்கலையர் நல்லருளா
லொக்கலையும் பிறக்கலையும்..........................
எக்கலையும் சற்றுணர்ந்தா ரீரெட்டாண் டெல்லையினில்.
உழைக்கரனுக் கன்பாகி யுண்மையறிந் துலகமெலாம்
பிழைக்க வருட்கவி பாடும் ..........................
....................தமிழ் மாறன்..........................
..............................................நண்பாயினன்
..............................................வாதவூ
ரெங்கோவின் செய்கையறிந்து..........................
செங்கோலை முறைநடத்துஞ் செழுந் தலைமைத்திற நல்கி.
Purāṇam: Mantri Sargam:—Stanzas 12, 13 and 14.

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brought in the construction of temples, and in feeding Śaiva devotees. The matter was reported to the king, who naturally called for an explanation, and Māṇikka-vāśagar had only God to appeal to in the circumstances; but God Śiva asked him to assure the king that the horses would reach Madura on a particular day. When the day came, Śiva Himself brought what appeared like horses. He had caught hold of a number of jackals and converted them for the time being into horses. The king did not know the truth and was perfectly satisfied; and the divine horse-merchant went away. The next day, the animals were gone, for they had become jackals once again and had fled to the jungles. When the king came to know of this he lost his temper and believing that Māṇikkavāśagar had cheated him, he put him into prison. Once again Māṇikkavāśagar appealed to God, who thereupon caused a flood in the river Vaigai, so as to endanger the city. The king now ordered every one in the city, old and young, to bring one basketful of mud and throw it on the bank of the river. There happened to live a very old woman who eked out her livelihood by selling baked rice flour, and she was quite unable to obey the king's order. She was in distress and then out of compassion for her, god Śiva came to her in the guise of a labourer and offered His services to her in return for a handful of rice flour. She gave it to Him; but Śiva the labourer kept the mud in his hands without throwing it on the bank. The king, who was personally supervising the business of stopping the floods, noticed the idleness of the labourer and gave him a blow with a stick. Śiva then threw the mud down and disappeared.

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But the blow was felt by every one in Madura. This opened the eyes of the king, who at once understood that Śiva had done all these miracles and so set Māṇikkavāśagar free. These incidents are repeatedly referred to by Māṇikkavāśagar in his *Tiruvāśagam*, and since Appar also alludes to it in the *Tēvāram*, it is indisputable that Appar must have lived at such a time that he could know of the incident.

In the *Periya Purāṇam*, it is stated that Appar and his sister Tilakavatiyār were left orphans by their parents, and that the former gave up Śaivism to become a Jaina. He later on became one of the greatest exponents of Jainism. This caused much anxiety to the pious sister who prayed to Śiva that Appar might come back to Śaivism. The prayer was heard, for Appar got a stomach-ache which could not be cured by the Jains. He then came to his sister who cured him by merely smearing the sacred ashes over his body. At once he came back to Śaivism. The Jains reported the matter to their Jain king and then began the persecution of Appar. That, however, ended in the conversion of the king also to Śaivism. It is now believed that the king so converted was Mahēndra Varma I who ruled between A.D. 600 and 625. Appar is also known to have visited Śiṟuttoṇḍar in his house at Tiruccengāṭṭaṅguḍi. This saint was the victor of Vātāpi in 642 A.D. The *Periya Purāṇam* speaks of Appar having met Sambandar and accompanied him in some of his wanderings. Sambandar is taken to have been the contemporary of Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan Pāṇḍya who must have ruled between A.D. 645 and 675. Because Appar alludes to the

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jackal incident, Appar must also have known Māṇikkavāśagar. In the *Tirukkōvai,* Māṇikkavāśagar refers to a Varaguṇa. Probably he knew him also. These are the materials available for fixing the date of Māṇikkavāśagar.

Taking all these details into consideration in the light of the stanza referred to above mentioning the respective ages of the four Samayācāryas, I gather that Appar must have been born in A.D. 600 (roughly). Since he lived for 81 years, he may be dated 600-681 A.D. From the *Periya Purāṇam,* it can be inferred that his sister was about five or six years older than himself. It was in her 12th year that her parents died, and she had also the additional misfortune of losing in the battle-field the person to whom she had been betrothed. The children were practically destitute, and boy Appar, then about six years of age, lived with his sister, believing in Śaivism. He might have become a Jain in his eighteenth year, the impulsive age when one's reasoning powers usually awake, but when one cannot be expected to have much discretion. Being an intelligent man, he studied all the Jaina scriptures, and won reputation even as an expounder of the Jain doctrines; but soon, he was attacked by the excruciating pain in the bowels and when his sister effected the cure, he came back to Śaivism. Soon afterwards, the conversion of the king also took place. It can safely be assumed that all these happened before the 23rd or the 24th year of Appar, that is, before A.D. 624. Mahēndra Varman's reign ended only in A.D. 625 or A.D. 630. It was in A.D. 642 that the Vātāpi battle was fought. According

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to the *Periya Purāṇam*, Śiṟuttoṇḍar was permitted to go back to Tirucceṅgāṭṭaṅguḍi where he spent much time feeding several *Śiva Bhaktas*. It was afterwards that he married. Probably child Śīrāḷa was born to him in A. D. 652. Three years afterwards, Appar and Sambandar met him. Sambandar was then about eleven years old and Appar 55. Sambandar was therefore born in A. D. 644. Since he died in his sixteenth year and since the conversion of the Pāṇḍya king was one of his last acts, it can be assumed that Sambandar was about fourteen years old when that event happened, that is, in A.D. 658. Sambandar died in A.D. 660. Afterwards Appar spent most of his time in Tiruppugalūr till his death in A.D. 681. From the Purāṇas relating to Māṇikkavāśagar, it is discovered that he had become a master of all arts before his sixteenth year, and it was then that he was called upon by the Pāṇḍya king to become the chief minister. Soon after, the jackal incident took place. Since Appar knew of it before his death, the miracle might have happened before Appar was 78 years old, that is, probably two years after Māṇikkavāśagar became minister. If we calculate that Māṇikkavāśagar was in his eighteenth year when the miracle happened, we may say that in A.D. 678 Māṇikkavāśagar was eighteen years old; that is, Māṇikkavāśagar was born in A.D. 660 —probably the year in which Sambandar died. He lived for 32 years. So we may give him the date 660-692 A.D. Very probably Appar and Māṇikkavāśagar knew each other, and Māṇikkavāśagar survived his friend for eleven years. We do find several common

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expressions in the *Tiruvāśagam* and in Appar's *Tēvārams*.

Having thus obtained the dates of the saint, we shall discover with the aid of epigraphy, the dates of the Pāṇḍya monarchs so that we can pick out the contemporary monarchs of Māṇikkavāśagar. The only known dates for the Pāṇḍya monarchs are those of Varaguṇa Varman (A.D. 862) and Kōc-Caḍaiyan (A.D. 770). Varaguṇa is said to have ascended the throne in A.D. 862. To establish the Śiṟuttoṇḍar—Narasimha Varman synchronism, and to explain A.D. 862 as the starting date of Varaguṇa Varman, we have to give, in the average, thirty years for each of the Pāṇḍya monarchs. Then we get the following rough dates:—Kaḍungōn 562-592; Avani Śūḷāmaṇi 592-622, Śeḻiyan Śēndan 622-652; Arikēsari I, 652-682; Raṇadhīra 682-712; Arikēsari II, 712-742; Kōc-Caḍaiyan 742-772 A.D.; Rājasimha II, 772-802 A.D.; Varaguṇa Mahārāja, 802-832; Tēr Māṟan 832-862; Varaguṇa Varman II, 862 to ?.

We have established before that Māṇikkar lived between A.D. 660 and 692. He could therefore have known both Arikēsari I and Raṇadhīra. The jackal incident, we have calculated took place in A.D. 678, that is, towards the close of Arikēsari I's reign. He must have had Kulacciṟai as his minister in A.D. 658, 20 years earlier. Kulacciṟai might have passed away any time between A.D. 658 and 676 when Māṇikkavāśagar was appointed minister. Thus there is nothing impossible in stating that Māṇikkavāśagar and



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Kulaccirai were both the chief ministers of Arikēsari I. Māṇikkavāśagar must have been appointed to the place several years after the death of Kulaccirai. We know that the *Tirukkōvai* of Māṇikkavāśagar was written after he had become a saint, for this was written in Cidambaram when the saint went and stayed there. That is why the poem is called also Tiruccirrambalakkōvai. In the *Tiruvāśagam,* Māṇikkavāśagar refers to Arikēsari, and in the *Tirukkōvai* he mentions Varaguṇa. Thus, this may also be utilised to conclude that the king whom he served was Arikēsari and the king who ruled in Madura when Māṇikkavāśagar was at Cidambaram was Varaguṇa, who had the title of Raṇadhīra.

We have also to remember that in Māṇikkavāśagar's writings, there is not a single allusion to Jains causing any kind of trouble. That was because of the Śaiva triumph already established by Appar and Sambandar. On the other hand, we have a mention of his winning a victory over the Buddhists who were in Cidambaram. The chapter alluding to that incident is called Buddharai Venṟa Sargam in the *Vādavūrar Purāṇam,* and one of the stanzas there also states that the Ceylon king of the time had just come to the Cōḷa country.[28] The dispute was witnessed by both the Cōḷa king and the Ceylon king.[29] In the stanza mentioning it, it is stated that the Cōḷa king told the Ceylon king that the elephants supplied him by the latter were good

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[28] ஈழவளநாடனு மெழுந்தடி பணிந்து திறை யிட்டகுறைநல்கி யிறைவ வாழி..........................

*Vādavūrar Purāṇam,* Buddha Sargam, St. 42.

[29] *Vādavūrār Purāṇam*: Buddha Sargam, St. 42.

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(வேழமிவை நல்ல).[30] This shows that at that time the Ceylon king was acknowledging the overlordship of the Cōḷa king and gave him therefore elephants. If we now examine the *Mahāvamśa,* we shall find out what sort of relations prevailed between the Cōḷas and the Ceylon kings of that time. Examining the chronological table of sovereigns in the *Mahāvamśa* Part II, pp. XVII and XVIII, we get the following list of kings :— Aggabodhi III, 623 A.D.; Jeṭṭhatissa 623; Aggabodhi III again 624; Dāṭhopatissa I 640; Kassapa II 652; Dappula I 661; Dāṭhopatissa II 664; Aggabodhi IV 673; Datta 689; Hattha-dāṭha 691; and Māna Vamma 691. The events relating to these monarchs are briefly as follow:—

Aggabodhi III and Jeṭṭhatissa:—

When Aggabodhi III carried on the government, Jeṭṭhatissa of the Malaya country advanced against the capital. A fight took place in which Aggabodhi was defeated and forced to go to India ' leaving his country and his kinsmen and his treasure behind him.'[31] Jeṭṭhatissa then mounted the throne but only to be overthrown by Aggabodhi who returned at the head of a 'large army of the Tamils'.[32] Jeṭṭhatissa committed suicide on the field of battle; Aggabodhi then resumed government but was soon defeated by the general Dāṭṭha Śiva who brought 'an army of the Tamils'.[33] The king was defeated and he fled to

[30] *ibid.*, St. 42.
[31] *Mahāvamśa,* Ch. 44. 4.
[32] *ibid.*, 44. 105.
[33] *ibid.*, 44. 125.

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India in the 12th year of his reign.[34] That was in A.D. 636. Dāṭtha Śiva mounted the throne as Dāṭhōpatissa 'He despoiled the temples of all their offerings of gold' and 'gave away the vessels for holding rice that were in the Mahāpāli to his *Tamil* followers who again destroyed all the king's palaces and the relic houses'.[35] 'When fortune turned and Aggabodhi took the government into his hands,' his cousin Kassapa did several wicked things and later 'Aggabodhi was defeated by Dāṭhōpatissa.'[36] 'His younger brother Kassapa then defeated Dāṭhōpatissa and *drove him to India'* and mounted the throne. 'Dāṭhōpatissa returned afterwards from India with a large army and made war against Kassapa.[37] 'But Kassapa killed him'. Thus Kassapa mounted the throne in 652. The Dāṭhōpatissa's sister's son, who bore the same name, fled to India for fear of Kassapa.'[38] Kassapa is credited with having done several things for the cause of Buddhism. His nephew Māna 'drove away the Tamils from their offices and from all power'.[39] The Tamils then invited 'Haṭṭhadāṭha who had fled to India, asking him to return thither and take up the government of kingdom'.[40] Haṭṭhadāṭha 'made haste to the island with an army of the Tamils'[41] He reigned in the name of Dāṭhōpatissa II (674 A.D.).

[34] *ibid.*, 44. 126.
[35] *ibid.*, 44. 135.
[36] *ibid.*, 44. 143.
[37] *ibid.*, 44. 153.
[38] *ibid.*, 44. 154.
[39] *ibid.*, 45. 11.
[40] *ibid.*, 45. 14.
[41] *ibid.*, 45. 18.

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He ruled for some time and then his younger brother Aggabodhi IV ascended the throne.[42] He did several good things. One of his officers was a Tamil by name Potthakuṭṭha.[43] The king Aggabhodhi IV died in 689 and Potthakuṭṭha took the government in his hands[44] and anointed one Datta in 689. 'He lived only two years and then he died. On his death, Potthakuṭṭha got yet another named Haṭṭhadāṭha and anointed him king and governed the country as he did before. This Haṭṭhadāṭha, after he had built the house of devotion entered the region of death six months after he had begun his reign.'[45]

From the foregoing account, it will be seen that throughout the seventh century (that is, from 623 onwards) there was a lot of confusion in Ceylonese history owing to the rivalry of the monarchs themselves, and each one of them in turn had not only to seek refuge in the Tamil country but also to seek assistance from the Tamil monarchs. This means that treaties ought to have been concluded with the Tamil sovereign (whoever he was) who would certainly have taken that occasion to insist upon subsidies etc., from the Ceylon kings. Could the Tamil king have been the Pāṇḍya? Possibly not; for the Vēḷvikkuḍi and Śinnamanūr plates would have made mention of the fact, if the Pāṇḍyas of the time had some sort of control over the Ceylon kings. We can be certain of this—because on a later occasion, the Pāṇḍya Śrī Māṟa, son of Varaguṇa I

[42] *ibid.*, 46. 1.
[43] *ibid.*, 46. 19.
[44] *ibid.*, 46. 40.
[45] *ibid.*, 42-46.

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and father of Varaguṇa Varman (who came to the throne in 862) made an attack upon Ceylon, and this fact is recorded in the Sanskrit portion of the Śinnamanūr plates, verse 11 of which runs thus:—"He (Māṟa) the matchless hero, the beloved of his subjects, having conquered in battle Māyā Pāṇḍya, the Kēraḷa and the king of Simhaḷa, etc. etc.,". That there was such an invasion is recorded in chapter 50 of the *Mahāvamśa* which says:—"Then Aggabodhi's younger brother Sēna raised the canopy of dominion in the city. And in process of time, the king of Pāṇḍya who had a great army, came thither from India and began to subdue the country....He laid waste the whole of the northern country and built up fortifications in the villages of Mahatalita....and the king of Pāṇḍya went out into the field mounted on an elephant....the army of the king of Pāṇḍya straight away hotly pursued the fugitives and spread destruction over the whole land, etc."[46] Thus, the Tamil sovereigns with whom treaties were concluded by the fugitive Ceylon kings in the seventh century were the Cōḷas. Of course, the Cōḷas were not themselves very powerful in their own land. That was partly the reason why their men were prepared to seek service in Ceylon and why these rulers were satisfied with what they got from the Ceylon monarchs. The tribute was very probably obtained in the form of elephants, for, unlike in the Cēra and the Pāṇḍya countries, elephants were very rare in the Cōḷa country. Thus there is certainly an element of historical truth in the *Vādavūrar Purāṇam*

[46] *Mahāvamśa*, ch. 50, vv. 12 ff.

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which speaks of the Cōḷa praising the elephant tribute made by the Ceylon king of the time. Who was the Ceylonese king who came to Cidambaram and got convinced of the superiority of Śaivism? We cannot be certain about it. But it does not very much matter whether he was Aggabodhi IV or Datta or Haṭṭhadāṭha of 691. All that we are now concerned with is, that Māṇikkavāśagar's date, as we have now arrived at, exactly fits in with the details obtained from the Ceylon chronicle, the *Mahāvamśa*. In passing we may notice that after the reign of Māna Vamma in 691 we do not hear, in the *Mahāvamśa,* of the Ceylonese kings obtaining assistance from the Tamils till we come to the period already noticed above, namely, A.D. 846.

Thus from all accounts, inscriptional and literary, we are forced to the conclusion that Māṇikkavāśagar must have lived between A.D. 660 and 692 and therefore must have been the contemporary of Arikēsari, the victor of Nelvēli and his son Koc-Caḍaiyan Raṇadhīra.

ii. *The Personal Experiences of Māṇikkavāśagar.*

Having now established the time when Māṇikkavāśagar lived, we may proceed to examine his work, the *Tiruvāśagam,* to find out what his own personal experiences were as a Śaiva. In the section called *Śiva Purāṇam,* he writes thus:—"Having been born as grass, plant, worm, tree, animals, birds, goblins, Asuras, Saints and Dēvas, having thus been born as all these moving and non-moving things or moving creatures in this great world, I have got tired. To-day I truly saw your golden feet and I obtained Mōkṣa. You stand in

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my heart as Ōmkāra. You are the truth, the pure, the rider on the bull; you are the essence of the Vedas, etc".[47] Here, we have the saint's realisation of the inner truth. God, according to him, is the beginning, middle and the end and also none of these, (ஆதியனே யந்த நடுவாகி யல்லனே). In the same poem[48] he alludes to God Śiva coming to the earth and showing His grace to the saint. He says:—"O Highest truth, you came to the earth and showed me your feet, and became the embodiment of mercy to me"; Māṇikkavāśagar calls Śiva by various names such as "Brilliance", "Nectar", "Ārya", "River of mercy", the "inner light", etc (தேசனே, தேனாரமுதே, பெருங்கருணைப் பேராறே, உள்ளத் தொளிக்கும் ஒளியானே). Though many of these attributes are purely descriptive, they also show how the saint conceived of the god in his different emotional or spiritual moods. It was not a Śiva outside the saint's heart that he was praising or describing. His perception was only of the Śiva

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[47] புல்லாகிப் பூண்டாகிப் புழுவாய் மரமாகிப்
பல் விருகமாகிப் பறவையாய்ப் பாம்பாகிக்
கல்லாய் மனிதராய்ப் பேயாய்க் கணங்களாய்
வல்ல சுரராகி முனிவராய்த் தேவராய்ச்
செல்லாவு நின்ற வித்தா வரசங்கமத்து
ளெல்லாப் பிறப்பும் பிறந்திளைத்தே னெம்பெருமான்
மெய்யேயுன் பொன்னடிகள் கண்டின்று வீடுற்றே
னுய்ய வென்னுள்ளத்து ளோங்கார மாய்நின்ற
மெய்யா விமலா விடைப்பாகா வேதங்க
ளையாவென வோங்கியாழ்ந்த கன்ற நுண்ணியனே
வெய்யாய்......................

[48] நிலந்தன்மேல் வந்தருளி நீள் கழல்கள்காட்டி
நாயிற் கடையாய்க் கிடந்த வடியேற்குத்
தாயிற் சிறந்த தயாவான தத்துவனே. Śiva Purāṇam,

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dwelling in his own heart. (என் சிந்தையுளுேற்றுன வுண்ணு ரமுதே யுடையானே). If he also calls Śiva the 'dancer of Cidambaram' and 'the god of the Pāṇḍya country' (தில்லையுட்கூத்தனே தென்பாண்டி நாட்டானே), it only shows that the poet pictures Śiva of his heart as manifesting Himself in Cidambaram and at Madura.

In the poem called *Kīrti Tiruvagaval,* Māṇikkavāśagar alludes to several legends about Śiva which appear in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* and they show that many of them were current even during his days. He alludes, for instance, to the mysterious appearance of the booth for the distribution of water, which forms the subject-matter of the 35th Tiruviḷaiyāḍal of Parañjōti.[49] Similarly, the story of the 33rd Tiruviḷaiyāḍal about the boon of the eight *Siddhis* is also alluded to thus:—"You established yourself at Paṭṭamangai and there granted the eight *Siddhis"*.[50] There are many more similar allusions which the reader can discover for himself. It is interesting to note that Māṇikkavāśagar says in one place that Śiva showed Himself at Kaḻumalam (கழுமலமதனிற் காட்சி கொடுத்தும்). Probably this refers to Śiva appearing before Sambandar at Shiyali. According to our scheme of dating, Sambandar

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49 தண்ணீர்ப் பந்தர் சயம் பெறவைத்து
நன்னீர்ச் சேவகனுகிய நன்மையும்.

50 பட்ட மங்கையிற் பாங்கா யிருந்தங்
கட்டமா சித்தி யருளிய வதுவும்
cf. முழுமதி முகத்திஞரை முனிந்துநீர் பட்டமங்கைப்
பழுமரமுத லஞ்ஞானப் பாறையாய்க் கிடமினென்ன.
*Kīrti Tiru Agaval,* and *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal*: No. 33, St. 9.



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lived before Māṇikkavāśagar, and so this allusion is not impossible. In the same poem Māṇikkavāśagar alludes in different places to the miracle (performed for his sake) of converting jackals into horses (நரியைக் குதிரை யாக்கிய நன்மையும்).

In the poem called *Tiruvaṇḍappagudi,* Māṇikkavāśagar describes the scheme of creation. He says that more than 101 crores of *jīvas* grew out of the primeval egg. (அண்டப்பகுதியினுண்டை. பிறக்க......நூற்றொரு கோடி யின்மேற் படவிரிந்தன). He then proceeds to describe the *Sthūla* (or gross) and *Sūkṣma* (or subtle) forms of Śiva. He also states that this Śiva appeared before him, (கண்ணுலியானுங் கண்டேன் காண்க). This Śiva is of the form of supreme bliss (பரமானப் பழங்கடலதுவே) This Ānanda is incapable of being realised by the ordinary mind or intellect, and cannot be expressed in words (சொற்பதங் கடந்த தொல்லோனுள்ளத் துணர்ச்சியிற் கொள்ளவும் படாஅன்). Hence, He is the great thief himself (ஒளிக்குஞ் சோரனைக் கண்டனம்). But when this inexpressible *Ānanda* or bliss was experienced by Māṇikkavāśagar, he was filled with joy and every hair of his body was conscious of His presence (வாக்கிறந்த முதமயிர்க்கா றோறும் தேக்கிடச் செய்தனன்).

Then Māṇikkavāśagar passes on in the *Pōṟṟit-tiruvagaval* to describe the jīva's experience in this universe. It gets born in all the different forms varying from the elephant to the ant.[51] After passing through these stages, it takes the human form. Then

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[51] யானை முதலா வெறும் பீறுய
ஊனமில் யோனியினுள் வினை பிழைத்து.

it is subjected to all kinds of hardships—first there are the troubles in the mother's womb; later come hunger, sleep, journeys, etc.[52] Later the *Jīva* has to escape the delusions caused by learning, wealth, etc.[53] Afterwards arises the thought of God (பகவத்கிருபை தார்சித்தமுண்டாகி) At that time six crores of delusions, or *Māyā Śaktis* throw obstacles in the way of realisation. Some come to preach the doctrine of atheism, some speak about one's duties to one's relations, etc., some about the *Vedas* and the *Karma*-path to be pursued, etc. The great *Māyā vādam* raises a storm of opposition and the materialist emits poisonous theories. The *Jīva* has to pass through all these stages undisturbed.[54] The *Jīva* must get firmly fixed in his experience of the reality and should not mind being called a mad man by the world.[55]

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52 காலை மலமொடு கடும்பகற் பசிவிசி
வேலை நித்திரை யாத்திரை பிழைத்தும்.

53 கல்வி யெனும் பல்கடற் பிழைத்தும்
செல்வ மென்று மல்லலிற் பிழைத்தும்.

54 நாத்திகம் பேசி நாத்தழும் பேறினர்
சுற்ற மென்னுந் தொல் பசுக்குழாங்கள்
பற்றி யழைத்துப் பதறினர் பெருகவும்
விரதமே பரமாக வேதி யரும்
சரத மாகவே சாத்திரங் காட்டினர்
சமய வாதங் கடந்த மதங்களே
அமைவதாக வரற்றி மலைந்தனர்
மிண்டிய மாயா வாத மென்னுஞ்
சண்ட மாருதஞ் சுழித்தடித்தா அர்த்
துலோகா யதனெனு மொண்டிறற் பாம்பின்
கலா பேதத்தக்கடு விடமெய்தி
அதிற் பெருமாயை யெனப்பல சூழவுந்
தப்பாமே........................

55 சகம் பேயென்று தம்மைச் சிரிப்ப
நாணதுவொழிந்து.

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He must regard the world's abuses as so many ornaments in his person (நாடது பழித்துரை பூணதுவாக). Then God will appear before him in the form of the *guru*: (அருபரத்தொருவன வனியில்வந்து குருபரனாகி யருளிய பெருமையை). The *Jīva* should not slight this *guru* (சிறுமையென்றிகழாதே). He must fall at the *guru's* feet and praise Him. Here, Māṇikkavāśagar begins the praise of God, and the poem ends in that manner.

His poem called the *Tiruccadagam* consists of 100 stanzas. It is divided into ten sections in each of which Māṇikkavāśagar states how he received the grace of god and had a knowledge of the truth. This poem was sung at Tirupperundurai where he had a sight of the *Guru*. In these stanzas, the superficial reader will fail to perceive the progressive realisations described by Māṇikkavāśagar. But a close scrutiny will reveal the spiritual experience of the poet in each one of his stages. The first ten stanzas contain the truth of Māṇikkavāśagar's first vision of god. There he thinks of god as the one peaceful spirit pervading the universe. So he says "My god is Bhava..........He is Śiva; He rules me. Though He knows my littleness, He knows that I am his servant and that I regard Him as my master".[56] Here, Māṇikkavāśagar conceives of himself as the ordinary worshipper who has no knowledge of the essential nature of God, but who has become a staunch

[56] பவனெம் பிரான்.........................
சிவனெம் பிரானென்னையாண்டு கொண்டானென் சிறுமைகண்டு
மவனெம் பிரானென்ன நானடியேனென்ன விப்பரிசே
புவனெம் பிரான் தெரியும் பரிசு.................

*Tiruccadagam*, St. 9.

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devotee. The next stage is reached when he realises that it is this God that manifests Himself as the *Ākāśa,* earth, wind, brilliance, the body, the *Jīva,* existence and non-existence and the ruler who directs the universe by making people think of 'I and mine.'[57] Here the poet recognises that everything that is perceived is a manifestation of the god whose worshipper he is. He then understands that such god could be neither He nor She nor It. So he says "My father (god) is He, She, It and *Ākāśa;* He is the great Fire; He is the finality and He beyond it".[58] The sections in which these ideas are respectively called *Meyyuṇardal,* or Perception of the truth, *Aṟivuṟuttal* or Imparting of Knowledge, and *Cuṭṭaṟuttal,* or Removal of the distinguishing mark. They are quite appropriate titles because in the first section, the poet perceives God as the only truth fit for worship; in the second he speaks to his own mind and instructs it to realise the one true God by identifying Him with everything in the world; and in the third, the poet understands that God is neither this, nor that; neither male nor female nor even neuter; but God is everything. The next section is called *Ātma Śuddhi,* or the purification of *Ātma.* Here the term *Ātma* means the *citta*

[57] வானாகி மண்ணாகி வளியாகி யொளியாகி
ஊனாகி யுயிராகி யுண்மையுமா யின்மையுமாய்க்
கோனாகி யானெனதென் றவரவரைக் கூத்தாட்டு
வானாகி நின்றாயை யென்சொல்லி வாழ்த்துவனே.
*Tiruccadagam,* St. 15.

[58] அச்சனாண் பெண்ணலி யாகாசமாகி
யார ழலாயந்த மாயப் பானின்ற
செச்சைமா மலர்புரையு மேனி யெங்கள்
சிவ பெருமானெம் பெருமான் தேவர்கோவே. *ibid.,* 29.

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or the mind, for otherwise the expression *Ātma-Śuddhi* would become meaningless since the *Ātma* is always pure. It may be also spoken of as the *Ātma* which is bound up with the *Jīva*. The purification consists in the removal of the *Pāśa* or bondage. Hence the whole section is devoted to giving advice to the foolish mind (called பிண நெஞ்சே &c.) to cling to the Reality (or God), and not to the unreal things of the universe. "O my foolish mind, you go against me and destroy me. We do not make any progress. Though you have seen the sacred ashes on the shoulders of Śiva, you do not lose yourself in the thought of Him. You do not destroy this body. This is your foolish deed,"[59] etc. When Māṇikkavāśagar thus purifies himself, he gets help from God, and so in the next section, called *Kaimmāṟu Koḍuttal*, or 'return obligation', he says that God favoured him by giving *Paṭṭi Maṇḍapam*,[60] which means evidently that he was acknowledged as a true servant of god.[61] The spiritual progress becomes very rapid after

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[59] மாறி நின்றெனைக் கெடக்கிடந்தனை யையெம்
மதியிலி மடநெஞ்சே
தேறு கின்றில மினியுனைச் சிக்கெனச்
சிவனவன் றிரடோண்மே
னீறு நின்றது கண்டனை யாயினு
நெக்கிலை யிக்காயங்
கீறு கின்றிலை கெடுவதுன் பரிசிது.................. *ibid.*, St. 33.

[60] This means a hall of learning in which assemblies of learned men and women are held, presided over by the king to discuss or dispute, and confer honour on the best. Śil. V. 101-2, Maṇi, I, 60-61. Kamb. Ram. Nagara. 62. S. K.

[61] கட்டறுத்தெனை யாண்டு மண்ணாரநீ
றிட்டவன் பரோடு யாவருங்காணவே
பட்டி மண்டப மேற்றினை
எட்டினோடிரண்டும் மறியேனையே. *ibid.*, 49.

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that. He has true experience of god's real nature, and so the next section is called *Anubōga Śuddhi* or purification by experience. Though that bliss is incapable of being adequately described, Māṇikkavāśagar attempts an account of it when he addresses God as 'honey, milk, sugar-cane juice, brilliance' etc.[62] When this purification by experience is also over, Māṇikkavāśagar sees God as Śankara or the creator of '*Śam*' or tranquillity—(*Śānti*).[62a] Hence in the next section he calls god by that name; (சங்கரா போற்றி மற்றோர் சரணிலேன் போற்றி).[63] He then dances with delight and the next section is written in that dancing rhythm. He seeks no more pleasures, however great they may be (போகம் வேண்டி வேண்டிலேன் புரந்தராதி யின்பமும் &c.).[64] It is in the succeeding section that he rises still higher and calls God by the name, Parañjōti, 'Supreme Effulgence'. He is no longer to be given the limiting name of Śaṁkara,[65] etc. He realises that 'he is false, his mind is false, his love is false, but that he can realise God through true devotion'.[66] The poet reaches the highest stage when he goes beyond *Ānanda*, bliss, and so in the next section called *Ānandātītam*, beyond the stage of bliss, he gives God the name of *Parāparam*.[67]

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[62] தேனைப்பாலைக் கன்னலின் றெளியை யொளியை. *ibid.*, 58.

[62a] If Śaṁkara is taken to mean 'the giver of prosperity', tranquillity is the prosperity conferred upon the spiritual aspirant.

[63] *ibid.*, 65.

[64] *ibid.*, 72.

[65] காணுமாறு காணேனுன்னை யந்நாட் கண்டேனும்
பாணே பேசியென்றன்னைப் படுத்ததென்ன பரஞ்சோதி. *ibid.*, 84.

[66] யானே பொய் யென்னெஞ்சம் பொய் யென்னன்பும் பொய்
யானால் வினை யேனழுதாலுன்னைப் பெறலாமே. *ibid.*, 90.

[67] உம்பரார்தம் பராபரா போற்றி.

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From the above, it is clear that Māṇikkavāśagar is expressing his own inner experiences in these songs. Elsewhere, he narrates also what he saw outside himself. He states quite definitely that Śiva became a cooly at Madura, and carried earth for staying the floods at Vaigai.[68] Here Māṇikkavāśagar says that the king belaboured the 'cooly' on the back. The poet says also in another stanza that the Pāṇḍya Nāḍ was converted into a Śiva Lōka.[69] This is probably a reference to the conversion of the king from Jainism to Śaivism, and the re-introduction of Śiva worship in the land. There is also the reference in the same poem to god coming on horseback and 'removing the sins of His devotees'. There are many more references to this incident in the *Tiruvāśagam*, (e.g. stanzas, 5, 6, 7, 8, of the *Kuyil pattu*).[70] The allusion is most probably to his own fault of misappropriating the king's money for god's purposes. In another of his verses, he says that the manner in which God adopted him as His servant was known to everyone.[71] From the next stanza, it is seen that God appeared before Māṇikkavāśagar as a Brahman to initiate him.[72] The vision that Māṇikkavāśagar had of

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68 கண் சுமந்த நெற்றிக் கடவுள் கலிமதுரை
மண் சுமந்து கூலிகொண்டக் கேவொன் மொத்துண்டு
புண் சுமந்த மேனி பாடுதுங் காணம்மானாய். *Tiruvammānai*, St. 8.

69 அப்பாண்டி நாட்டைச் சிவலோக மாக்குவித்த *ibid.*, St,. 11.

70 ........................பெருந்துறையான்
கொற்றக் குதிரையின்மேல் வந்தருளித் தன்னடியார்
குற்றங் கணீக்கிக் குணங்கொண்டு கோதாட்டி. *ibid.*, St. 20.

71 தானென்னை யாட்கொண்ட தெல்லாருந் தாமறிவார். *ibid.*, St. 13.

72 அருவாய் மறை பயிலந்த ணனாயாண்டுகொண்ட
திருவான தேவற்கே சென்றூதாய். *ibid.*, St. 14.

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god was not inside his own mind, but was outside himself.[73] There is also a reference in one place to the triumph over Buddhism and other religions effected through the grace of God.[74] Very probably he is referring to his success against the Buddhists in Cidambaram. The poem, it is to be noticed, was sung in that place.

In the other songs of Māṇikkavāśagar, more or less the same things are mentioned, and so they need not be taken up for examination here. But we have some interesting details about the king of the Pāṇḍya country in Māṇikkavāśagar's song called *Tiruppāṇḍiccadagam.* This song gives an account of God appearing on horse-back. The poet says "my mind will not know of any one other than Him who is the other half of the mountain's daughter, who became the imperishable nectar of the Pāṇḍya king, who blessed (us) with his lotus feet, who stood before us in his captivating form, and who came as a commander on horse-back."[75] From this stanza it is seen that the Pāṇḍya king at that time was a great devotee of Śiva. As we have noticed before, the king was Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāran who had been converted

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[73] அரையொடு நாகமசைத்த பிரானவனியின் மேல்
..................வந்தாண்ட திறமுரையாட..................
Tiruttel̤l̤ēnam, St. 6.

[74] புத்தன் முதலாய புல்லறிவிற் பல்சமயந்
தத்தம் மதங்களிற் றட்டுளுப் பப்பட்டு நிற்கச்
சித்தஞ் சிவமாக்கிச் செய்தனவே. Tiruttōl̤ Nōkkam, St. 6.

[75] பருவரை மங்கைதன் பங்கரைப் பாண்டியற் காரமுதா
யொருவரை யொன்று மிலாதவரைக் கழற் போதிறைஞ்சித்
தெரிவர நின்றுருக்கிப் பரி மேற்கொண்ட சேவகனை
ஒருவரை யன்றி யுருவறியா தென்றனுள்ளமதே. *ibid.*, St. 1.



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by Sambandar. In the next stanza Māṇikkavāśagar states that, on the occasion when god appeared on horse-back, the king's cycle of birth and death came to an end. This stanza runs:—If the god whose brilliance will hide the sun, appears on horse-back with the spear in his hand, then there will happen a calamity for the subjects and the Madura king's next birth will be destroyed. Literally it means "the boat of the Madura king's next birth will be upset".[76] Here it is seen that Māṇikkavāśagar was stating what he actually saw. There was a calamity for the subjects, i.e. the monarch died or abdicated. But so far as the monarch was concerned, there was no calamity for himself, because he crossed over the ocean of future birth. This seems to be the correct interpretation of the stanza. Thus the historical fact revealed here is that he did not reign long after the miracle of jackals happened. If we look at the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* account, we see that Arimardana Pāṇḍya did not reign till his death. It is stated there that he crowned his son Jagannātha Pāṇḍya, and understanding the true path from his minister Māṇikkavāśagar, obtained the grace of god, enjoyed Śivānanda and reached the feet of Śiva.[77] We know that almost imme-

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[76] கதிரை மறைத்தன்ன சோதி கழுக்கடை கைப் பிடித்துக்
குதிரையின்மேல் வந்து கூடிடுமேற் குடிகேடு கண்டீர்
மதுரையர் மன்னன் மறு பிறப்போடம் மறித்திடுமே. *ibid.*, St. 2.

[77] அம்மகனை முடிசூட்டி யரசாக்கி வாதவூரமைச்சர் பிரான்
மெய்ம்மை நெறிவிளங்கி யிருவினை யொப்பிலரன் கருணை விளைநோக்
கால், மும்மை மலத்தொடர் நீந்திச் சிவானந்தக் கடற் படிந்து முச்சண்
மூர்த்தி, செம்மலர்த் தாணிழலடைந்தான் றிறலரி மர்த்தனனென்னுந்
தென்பார் வேந்தன், *Tiruviḷ: Pur.*: 61-90.

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diately after the miracle, Māṇikkavāśagar himself left Madura, and went away to Cidambaram. So, we can infer that when the king perceived that Māṇikkavāśagar was a saint, he begged pardon for his own actions, and acknowledging the saint as his *guru,* obtained initiation from him and renounced the kingdom leaving his son on the throne. It was, perhaps, this renunciation that entitled the king to be ranked along with the *Nāyanārs.* Such an interpretation of the texts is also valuable in giving support to our hypothesis that Māṇikkavāśagar must have seen during his lifetime two Pāṇḍya kings ruling, Arikēsari and Varaguṇa.

Now we may pass on to examine the details relating to the fourth of the Śaiva Samayācāryas—Sundaramūrti Nāyanār.

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# CHAPTER XIII

## SUNDARAMŪRTI.

### *The Date of Sundaramūrti.*

The first point to be taken up for investigation about Saint Sundaramūrti is his date. No finality has been reached about it, although it is clear that he lived later than Appar and Sambandar, since he has named them both in the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai*. The late Mr. Srinivasa Pillai of Tanjore has discussed the point, and given it as his opinion that the saint must have lived between 804 and 825 A.D.[1] But it is very doubtful if this position is to be accepted. Let us, therefore, examine his chief arguments.

1. He has made a mention of Sambandar and Appar and so Sundarar was later than both. So he lived after 655 A.D. roughly.

2. Varaguṇa II, the Pāṇḍya king came to the throne in 862-3 A.D. He was a Śaiva saint praised by Paṭṭinattup-Piḷḷai, Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi and others. He is not alluded to by Sundaramūrti in his *Tirut-toṇḍattogai,* and so Sundarar ought to have lived before 862 A.D.

3. Sundarar was a contemporary of Cēramān Perumāḷ who visited the Pāṇḍya court when the Pāṇḍya had along with him his son-in-law who was a

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[1]*Tamiḻ Varalāṟu*: (Vol. ii, p. 66).

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Cōḷa king. The Cōḷas were therefore weak. The Cōḷas came to power after 849 A.D. when Vijayālaya came to the throne. So Sundarar ought to have lived before 849 A.D.

4. There was a Varaguṇa, who was the Pāṇḍyan king, from whom a musician called Pāṇa Pattiran obtained a letter of introduction to Cēramāṇ Perumāḷ. So the Pāṇḍya contemporary of Cēramān Perumāḷ must have been Varaguṇa I or Varaguṇa Mahārāja, the grand-father of Varaguṇa Varman of 862. This king might have come to the throne about A.D. 802.

5. There is a tradition that Cēramān Perumāḷ was the last of the Perumāḷs and that he went away to Mecca after becoming a Mahomedan. This must refer to his having gone to Kailās, according to the Periya Purāṇa account. The date of his departure to Mecca is the starting date of the Kollam era in 825 A.D.

Thus Sundarar ought to have lived between 804 and 825 A.D.

It will be clear to any one who reads the above-mentioned arguments that the conclusions are unworthy of acceptance, since they are based ultimately upon a baseless tradition about Cēramān Perumāḷ becoming a Mahomedan. We know that Cēramān Perumāḷ is a Śaiva saint glorified by Sundarar and cherished by all the Tamils even at the present day. Such a thing would be impossible if Cēramān Perumāḷ had become a Mahomedan.

It becomes therefore necessary to take note of several bits of evidence about Sundarar and piece them

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together so as to arrive at some acceptable conclusion. In the first place, we know that he was later than Appar and Sambandar. The question may, however, arise as to whether he might not have been one of the contemporaries of Appar. But it may be, more or less, finally answered that Sundarar came only after Appar died. We arrive at this conclusion from the fact that in one of Sundarar's songs he alludes to Appar having sung 4902 songs.[2] The tradition now current about Appar is that he sang 49000 tens on the whole though only 312 have survived. It is just possible that people in course of time forgot that the number 49000 referred to the songs themselves and not to the tens. Making allowance for this explicable error in the traditional reckoning of Appar's songs, we arrive at the result that Sundarar lived at a time when Appar's songs had all got numbered. That could have happened only after the death of Appar, for we must believe that he must have gone on singing till his death. Thus we get at the lower limit.

Again, the present day opinion among scholars is that Pūśalār Nāyanār was a contemporary of the Pallava king Narasimha Varman II or Rājasimha, circa 680-700 A.D.[3] Since Pūśalār Nāyanār was one of 63 devotees honoured by Sundaramūrti in the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai*, Sundarar must have been a contemporary of Narasimha Varman II or anyone of his successors.

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[2] ... ........................

இணைகொளே ழெழு நூறிருபனுவலீன் றவன்றிருநாவி

னுக்கரையன். Sund. 65. 2.

[3] *Vide* R. Gopalan: The Pallavas: pp. 108—109.

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Sundarar is known from the *Periya Purāṇam* account to have been a friend of the fierce Kōṭpuli Nāyanār who once invited Sundarar to his house and did him all honour. "The commander-in-chief Kōṭpuli gave a feast in his house to Sundarar."[4] As for this Kōṭpuli himself, he seems to have been a *Tantri* (Executive officer) of the Cōḷa king, who had the duty of going to war on behalf of his king.[5] He was a resident of Tiru-nāṭṭiyattānkuḍi. That happens to be a railway station near Tiruvālūr. The Periya Purāṇam account is confirmed by Sundarar's Tevāram song where he praises the commander-in-chief thus: "Nāṭṭiyattānkuḍi of the Cōḷas of ancient fame, (the residence of) Kōṭpuli renowned as a slayer (of foes) in his victory over the inimical monarchs who joined together".[6] This reference becomes interesting because it relates to a fight in which some kings are jointly defeated by a Cōḷa general. We shall have to take account of this when we seek for an answer to the question who was the Pāṇḍya contemporary of Sundarar.

Another *Periya Purāṇam* saint who knew of Sundarar was Ēyar-kōn-kalikkāma Nāyanār, a native of Tirupperumaṅgalam in the Cōḷa country immediately to the north of the Kāvēri. It might have been

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4 செங்கோலரசனருளுரிமைச் சேனாபதியாங்கோட் புலியார்

* * *

தங்கோமனையிற்றிரு வமுதுசெய்வித்து ........P. P. Ēyarkōn, St. 37.

5 வேந்தனேவலிற் பகைஞர் வெம்முனைமேற் செல்கின்றார்

P. P. Kōṭpuli. St. 3.

6 கூடாமன்னரைக் கூட்டத்துவென்ற கொடிறன்கோட்புலிச் சென்னி நாடார்தொல் புகழ் நாட்டியத்தான் குடி ...... Sund. 15. 10.

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Tirumaṅgalam of the Trichinopoly Taluq. He was also spoken of as a hereditary commander of the Cōḷa king,[7] although he is not mentioned as having entered into fighting for the sake of the Cōḷa.

From the two foregoing references we have to infer that however small the Cōḷa kingdom might have been, the Cōḷa kings were not without a kingdom altogether. The king had some commanders whom he could order to win victories for his sake.

Again, the *Periya Purāṇam* makes mention of a king called 'Narasinga Munai Araiyan' who was ruling the country of Munaippāḍi nāḍu,[8] in which Sundarar was born, and who brought him up as an adopted child. Sundarar was born at Tiruṇāvalūr in the Tirumunaippāḍi nāḍu in the Tirukkōyilūr Taluq. Its present name is Tirunāmanallūr.[9] It is found to be very near Tiruvāmūr, of the Cuddalore Taluq, the birth-place of Appar. That place is also spoken of as being in the Tirumunaippāḍi nāḍu.[10] As for the region so called, we have to infer that it consisted of the major portion of the South Arcot District. The coast region must have been in the hands of the Pallavas. That is why Sundarar speaks of the Pallavas in glowing terms: He says: "The god of Puliyūr Ciṟṟambalam will cause trouble to kings who refuse to pay tribute to the Pallavas

[7] P. P. Ēyarkōn, St. 5.

[8] P. P. Taḍuttāṭkoṇḍa Purāṇam, St. 5.

[9] South Arcot Dt. Gazetteer: p. 380.

[10] P. P. Tirunāvuk, St. 2.

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who guard the world."[11] Evidently then, at the time of Sundaramūrti, the Pallavas were very powerful.

The *Periya Purāṇam* also speaks of Sundarar's relations with Cēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār. We have already seen that when he went over to Madura, there was a Cōḷa king who had married the Pāṇḍya king's daughter, and was living in the palace. If we find out who the Pāṇḍya king could have been, the problem of Sundaramūrti's date will be solved. It therefore becomes necessary to examine the details we get about the Pāṇḍya kings from the time of Arikēsari or Ninṟa Śīr Neḍumāṟan. The really valuable document in this connection is the Vēḷvikkuḍi grant.

In the account of Arikēsari Asama Saman, we have mention of the Kēraḷa king which is worth careful investigation. The Tamil portion runs as follows:—

Pār-aḷavun-tani-c-ceṁkōṟ kēraḷanaippala
muṟaiyum urimaic-cuṟṟamōḍavar yānaiyum
puriśai-mmadiṟ puliyūr-ppaga-nāḻigai
iṟavāmai igal āḻiyuḷ venṟu koṇḍum

(Ep. Ind. XVII, pp. 300-1, lines 56-59).

The full force of the passage is not brought out in Mr. H. Krishna Sastri's translation, and so we shall attempt to discover its meaning. It may be translated thus: "On the field of war, he defeated several times in battle lasting hardly a day, at Puliyūr, the Kēraḷa, who

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11 .........மண்ணுலகங்காவல் பூண்ட
உரிமையாற் பல்லவர்க்குத் திறைகொடாமன்னவரை மறுக்கஞ்செய்யும்
பெருமையார் புலியூர்ச் சிற்றம்பலத்தெம்பெருமான்......Sund. 90. 4.



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exercised a matchless sway over the whole earth and captured his relatives, elephants and fortresses."

The points to be noticed in the passage are the following:

1. The Kērala had extensive territory.

2. He had undivided sovereignty over the whole country of the Ceras( தனிச்செங்கோல் )

3. He had with him in the battle-field his relations who had claims upon his kingdom (*urimai-c-cuṟṟam*).

4. The fight was at Puliyūr.

Taking these up for close scrutiny, we can infer that at the time the battle was fought, the whole of the Çēra country was under one ruler although it stretched over a vast area. We know that the coast capital of the Cēras was Koḍungōḷūr (or Vañji) in the neighbourhood of Cochin. The southern part of the Cēra country or Vēṇaḍ, as it was called in the olden days, must have been left in the hands of some near relation of the king for administrative purposes. In other words, the Cēra's son, (the prince who had a claim to the throne and the whole kingdom), would have been viceroy guarding the South Cēra country. But in the fight which took place with the Pāṇḍya king at Puliyūr, which is now a railway station near Tenkāśi (Tinnevelly Dt.), the Cēra monarch and his viceroy, the prince, were defeated. When Puliyūr fell into the Pāṇḍya's hands, entrance into the west coast became quite easy because that was the gate leading into the Cēra's dominions

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in that region. So the Pāṇḍya went westwards and that is the meaning of the immediately succeeding portion of the document. It runs:

"Vēl āḻiyum viyan paṟambum ēlāmaiśenṟu eṟindu aḷittum"[12]

which means "having defeated the sea of javelins and entered without opposition into the broad and open country." A glance at the map will suffice to bring out the full significance of the expression '*viyanpaṟambu*' or 'the broad expanse of open country'. When the pass is gone through, the Travancore state on the western side of mountain ranges is one huge plain country.

The victory thus gained must have been decisive against the Cēra; for we find that during the time of his successor Kōc-Caḍaiyan Raṇadhīra, the fighting is conducted with the Āy Vēḷ and not the Cēra king. The victory first gained was at Marudūr or Tiruppuḍaimarudūr in the Ambāsamudram Taluq (Tinnevelly Dt.). Then there were two more victories, one at Śeṅgoḍi, and another at Pudānkōḍu. These places have not been hitherto identified; but it is not difficult to determine where they were. In Map 41 of the Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. 26, we find the name Puthānapuram, indicating the region at the entrance into the Ghāt section of the Trivandrum railway from the Travancore side. With Puthanapuram on the Travancore side and Ambāsamudram on the Tinnevelly side,

[12] Ibid., p. 301, lines 59—60.

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we can be fairly certain that Śeṅgoḍi is only Śeṅkōṭṭah, on the same route. Thus it is clear that Raṇadhīra was pursuing the Āy chieftain from Marudūr near Ambāsamudram westwards till he drove him beyond Pudankōḍ or Puthānapuram.

Then we have mention of a victory over the Mahārathas at Maṅgaḷapuram. That might have been also in the Cēra country. The next thing stated of Raṇadhīra is significant. This expression is 'Aṟai-kaḍal-vaḷāgam-podu-moḻi agaṟṟi', which means 'removing the word "common property" with reference to the littoral of the roaring (western) sea.'[13] The question now to be asked is "How could there be a talk that the region was common property?" The answer is that the Cēra was no longer master there. The land was being appropriated by the Āy Vēḷ. The Pāṇḍya would not permit it. So he demonstrated by his success that all the land abandoned by the Cēra was now the region belonging to the Pāṇḍya. Thus the Pāṇḍya got real claim to sovereignty over the southern Cēra country. That is why Raṇadhīra calls himself by the singularly appropriate title 'Tenna-Vānavan'[14] which means 'the lord of the South Cēra country.' The north Cēra country continues in the hands of the Kēraḷa or Vānavan. His title Cōḷan is due to his being the son of Mangaiyarkkaraśi, the wife of Ninṟa Śīr Neḍu Māṟan (Arikēsari).

[13] Ibid., p. 301, line 67.

[14] Mr. Krishna Sastri wrongly changes the word 'tenna' into 'tennan' in his translation.

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One important thing to be noticed in this connection is that neither Arikēsari nor Kōc-Caḍaiyan entered into hostile relations with the Cōḷas. That was also the case with the latter's successor Rājasimha. This king is spoken of as renewing the walls of Kūḍal (Madura), Vañji (Karūr) and Kōḻi (Uṟaiyūr).[15] Though Uṟaiyūr is mentioned, we have no indication of ill-will between the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍya. The fighting is all against the Pallava. The battles are at Neḍuvayal, Kuṟumaḍai, Maṇṇikkuṟicci, Tirumaṅgai, Pūvalūr, Kuḻumbūr, Periyalūr, etc. They have to be located in the Aratāṅgi Taluq[16] of the Tanjore district and its neighbourhood. These being in the Cōḷa country, it is possible that the Cōḷa sought the assistance of the Pāṇḍya against the Pallava, who was evidently Nandivarman Pallava Malla.

Coming to the donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi grant, he also calls himself ' Tenna-Vānavan ' or the Lord of the South Cēra country. But the document is written in the third year of his reign. In the Madras Museum plates, issued in the 17th year of his reign, the situation gets changed. He adopts the title *Tennan*, Vānavan, etc. In other words, he has already asserted his power over the North Cēra king. The document states that he defeated the combined forces of the Cēra and the Pallava. The passage relating to the event speaks of his simultaneous victory over the Kēraḷa in the west and the Pallava in the east.[17]

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[15]Ep. Ind., xvii, p. 301.

[16]We find the following among the names of villages in the Arantāṅgi Taluq: Peruvayal (Neḍuvayal?), Periyalūr, Pūvalūr, Kuṟumbūr (Kuḷumbur?) and Maṇṇikkuḍi (Maṇṇikkuṟicci?).

[17]Ind. Ant. 1893, p. 70.

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Here also we do not find mention of any hostility between the Pāṇḍya and the Cōḷa. As for the relations between the Pāṇḍya and the Cēra, though there was no hostility in the reigns of Raṇadhīra and his son Rājasimha, we find that fighting was resumed in the time of the donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi grant.[18]

Another interesting detail obtained from the Madras Museum plates is that the Pāṇḍya is spoken of as going to war with the king of Vēṇ or Vēṇād, that is, South Travancore, defeating him at Viḻiñam.[19] This shows clearly that the Cēra country is split up now into several fragments. The north is in the hands of the 'Kēraḷa', the representative of the old imperial dynasty; the southermost part was in the hands of a Vēṇād chieftain and the land midway between the two was in the hands of the Pāṇḍyas from the time of Raṇadhīra onwards.

The rule of this powerful monarch (Neḍunjaḍaiyan) must have been very long, roughly fifty years.[20] He was succeeded by Śrī Māra Śrī Vallabha who is credited with having defeated the Kēraḷa, the Simhaḷa, Vallabha, Pallava, the Cōḷa, etc.[21] We are concerned here only with the relations that the Pāṇḍya king maintained with the Cēra on the one hand and the Cōḷa on the other. Evidently they were hostile. For the

[18] Scholars are now agreed that the donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi grant was the same as the donor of the Madras Museum plates. *Vide* K. A. Nilakanta Śāstri: Pāṇḍyas: p. 59. et. seq.

[19] Mad. Mus. pl. l. 40.

[20] K. A. N. Śāstri, p. 60.

[21] Ibid., p. 68.

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purpose of finding out the date of Sundaramūrti, we need not pursue the career of the Pāṇḍyas further.

Now let us attempt to pick out the particular Pāṇḍya king who could have been the contemporary of Sundarar. When we remember that friendly relations must have prevailed between the Cōḷa, the Cēra and the Pāṇḍya and that the Pāṇḍya king must have been a Śaiva devotee, we more or less lay our finger upon Raṇadhīra's son Rājasimha. The inscription speaks of him as having worshipped Paśupati at Pāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi[22]

We have now to utilise the material about Kōṭpuli Nāyanār, which has been referred to before. Sundarar speaks of him as having won a victory over the combined forces of enemy kings.[23] Who were the enemies, and on whose behalf did he fight? He was the commander-in-chief of the Cōḷa king and so he ought to have fought on behalf of the Cōḷa. But we know that the Cōḷa was in the palace of his father-in-law, and never figured in any battle during this period. The conclusion, therefore, is that Kōṭpuli fought on behalf of both the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍya. The Pāṇḍyas were offering shelter to the Cōḷas, and so the Pāṇḍya could have utilised the military resources of the Cōḷa when fighting had to be conducted in the interests of the Cōḷa. If that were so, who were the enemy kings? The answer can be found in the Vēḷvikkuḍi plate description of the battles of Neḍuvayal, Kuṟumaḍai, Maṇṇikkuṟicci, etc.

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[22] Ep. Ind. xvii, p. 301.

[23] கூடாமன் னரைக்கூட்டத்து வென்றகோட்புலி. Sund. 15, 10.

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The passage relating to these battles has not been properly translated by the epigraphist and so it is necessary to examine the lines in some detail.

First, the Pāṇḍya is said to have thoroughly defeated at Neḍuvayal those who hurried forward with their fierce elephants and fearful javelins.

Secondly, he destroyed the rage of the proud (foes) at Kuṟumaḍai.

Thirdly, he destroyed the strength of those who fought in front of Maṇṇikkuṟicci and Tirumaṅgai.

Fourthly, he saw, at Pūvalūr, the backs of (that is drove away) those who came into the field with the ocean-like army of their vassals,[24] (Ēvalōr).

Fifthly, with his javelin, he captured the fast horses and dark elephants of his enemies at Koḍumbāḷūr.

Sixthly he captured the innumerable big elephants and horses to the disgrace of the Pallava at Kuḻumbūr.

Seventhly, he destroyed the reputation of the envious foes at Periyalūr.

Thus, we have seven achievements of the Pāṇḍya recorded, and only in one of them is the Pallava directly mentioned. In the rest, we have not only the use of the plural to indicate the enemy (whereas the singular is used when the Pallava is mentioned); but

[24] In line 74 the compound expression 'Aḻittumēvalōr' must be split up into 'Aḻittum-Ēvalōr'; otherwise the poetry will be faulty. Note the alliteration (*Mōnai*) in 'Ēvalōr' and 'Eṟṟedirēy'.

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the reference is in general terms ('Vandavarai'). This shows that the Pallava personally appeared only in one battle field, that is, at Kuḻumbūr, and in all the other battles, either his forces or his vassal chieftains had been sent. So, the Pāṇḍya had to face several foes simultaneously all of whom were fighting on behalf of the Pallava. Naturally, therefore, he would also have requisitioned the services of his own vassals and commanders. Of these Kōṭpuli Nāyanār could have been one. That is the reason why Sundarar speaks of Kōṭpuli as the victor in the crowd (*kūṭṭam*) of the enemy kings (*kūḍā mannar*).

It is now known that these battles were all against Nandivarman Pallavamalla. Particularly the battle at Maṇṇai or Maṇṇikkuṟicci (now called Maṇṇikkuḍi in the Aṟantāngi tāluq) is specially referred to by Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār in Periya Tirumoḻi II. 8. 3.[25] This gives also the clue to the probable date when these battles were fought. It was Pallavamalla's general, Udayacandra, who fought against the Tamils. The battles are enumerated in the Udayēndiram plates dated in the 21st year of Pallavamalla's reign. So they ought to have been waged before circa 731 A.D. on the supposition that the king ruled from 710 to 775 A.D.[26] Hence it becomes clear that Mān Tēr Māṟan, the son of Raṇadhīra must have ruled in 731 A.D. or thereabouts. If Kōṭpuli was employed as one of the

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[25] ........மண்ணையில் புண்புகர்வேல் நெடுவாயிலுகச் செருவில் முன்னாள்
பரந்தவன் பல்லவர்கோன் பரமேச்சுரவிண்ணகரமே

[26] Gopalan: Pallavas: p. 119.

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commanders, Sundarar was alive in 731 A.D. Likewise Cēramān Perumāḷ was ruling at Kranganore (Koḍuṅkōḷūr) at that time.

Let us examine the matter a little more closely. In connection with Māṇikkavāśagar, we have taken notice of a verse giving the respective ages of the Samayācāryās. That verse states that Sundarar lived only 18 years. Sundarar became a devotee of Śiva only after he was called away by the Lord on the eve of Sundarar's marriage. He must have been about 16 years old at that time. Thus as a devotee and Tēvāram hymner his life consisted of only two years, that is, between his 16th and 18th years. So when he knew his contemporary Kōṭpuli (who offered him, in vain, one of his daughters in marriage) Sundarar was between 16 and 18 years old. That was about the year A.D. 731, as we have concluded just now. Therefore the Pāṇḍya king who honoured him was Rājasimha I.

Cēramān Perumāḷ died along with Sundarar, for both are spoken of as having gone to Kailās together. So the Cēra monarch also died soon after the year 731 A.D. Hence he might not have known the donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi grant, the son of Rājasimha.

In this connection, we have to take up for the sake of clearness the vexed question of Pāṇḍya genealogy and the probable dates of these monarchs. Certain conclusions have been reached by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Śāstri,[27] but they require careful re-examination.

[27] K. A. N. Śāstri: p. 41.

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The order of succession according to the Vēḷvikkuḍi plates is as follows:—

1. Kaḍuṅgōn.
2. Māṟavarman Avanicūḷāmaṇi.
3. Śēndan.
4. Arikēsari Māṟa Varman, victor of Nelvēli, Śennilam and Puliyūr.
5. Kōc-Caḍaiyan Raṇadhīra, victor of Śengoḍi, Pudānkōḍu and Maṅgaḷāpuram.
6. Māṟan Rājasimha, victor of Neḍuvayal, Kuṟumaḍai, Maṇṇikkuṟicci, Tirumaṅgai, Pūvalūr, Koḍumbāḷūr, Kuḷumbūr.
7. Neḍunjaḍaiyan, donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi grant.

The larger Śinnamanūr plates give the following genealogy:—

1. Parāṅkuśa, who defeated Villavan at Nelvēli, and Pallavan at Śankaramangai.
2. Jaṭila.
3. Rājasimha.
4. Varaguṇa Mahārāja.
5. Śrī Māṟa Śri Vallabha.
6. Varaguṇa Varman.
7. Vīranārayaṇa Neḍunjaḍaiyan.
8. Others.

Mr. K. A. N. Śāstri has identified No. 1 of the Śinnamanūr plate with No. 4 of the Vēḷvikkuḍi plate.

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The rest follows naturally, that is, Nos. 5, 6 and 7 of the Vēḷvikkuḍi plates are identified with Nos. 2, 3 and 4 of the Śinnamanūr plates. Thus he arrives at the conclusion that the donor of the Vēḷvikkuḍi plate is the same as Varaguṇa Mahārāja, the grand-father of Varaguṇa Varman.

But the difficulty that is caused by such an arrangement is regarding dates. Varaguṇa Varman (No. 6 of the Śinnamanūr plates) is known to have ascended the throne in A.D. 862, and the donor of the Vēḷvikkudi grant (who might have ruled for roughly 50 years) was king in A.D. 770. No. 5 of the Śinnamanūr plates was also a king with a long rule. So nearly 100 years are given to these kings. That is not impossible. Therefore, Mr. Śāstri, has made A.D. 765 the starting date for Neḍunjaḍaiyan and gives 25 years for his predecessor Māra Varman Rājasimha. Thus that king gets 740 to 765 as his date. He is the king who fights vigorously against Pallavamalla at Neḍuvayal, etc., the battles mentioned in the Udayēndiram plates issued in the 21st year of Pallavamalla's reign who started his rule in A.D. 710. The battles were all over before circa 731 A.D., and Mr. Śāstri makes the Pāṇḍya victor come to the throne about ten years afterwards. This is certainly an untenable position, unless it is proved that Māṟavarman fought the battles as a viceroy or prince for which we have no evidence.[28]

[28]Pallava chronology is not so well settled as this argument assumes; a recent writer assigns A.D. 723—788 for Nandivarman Pallavamalla's rule.—*K. A. N.*

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Having thus arrived at the conclusion that the fight at Nelvēli or Nenmeli was with the Pallava general, let us enquire into the question if it was in the time of the son or grandson of Śeḻiyan Śēndan. The son is Arikēsari whose achievements are fully described in the Vēḷvikkuḍi plates, and we have not even a word of hostility with the Pallava. The same is the case with his son Kōc-Caḍaiyan Raṇadhīra. It was only Raṇadhīra's successor that had a lot of fighting with Pallavamalla. The Pallava records also bear witness to the absence of fighting between the Pāṇḍyas and the Pallavas before the days of Nandivarman Pallavamalla.

Thus we have to conclude that the Śinnamanūr plate speaks only of Raṇadhīra's son as Arikēsari Parānkuśa. Hence, it is clear that there were two Arikesaris, the first one who fought with the Cēras, and the second who fought with the Pallava.

Accepting this position, we are bound to concede also that the second Arikēsari had a 'pautra' (grandson) by name Rājasimha.[29] That Rājasimha was the son of the donor of the Velvikkudi plates and father of the king named Varaguṇa Mahārāja. Thus we have to accept the tentative genealogical list drawn up by the late Venkayya in 1908.[30]

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[29] Śinnamanūr plates: line 106. See, however, K. A. N. Śāstri, Pāṇḍyan Kingdom, p. 51, n. 1, and pp. 253—5.

[30] Ep. Ind., 1908, p. 66.

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As for chronology, we may assign the dates somewhat as follows: Śrī Vallabha 822-862 A.D. Varaguṇa Mahārāja 802-822, Rajasimha II 782-802, Neḍunjaḍaiyan 737-782, Arikēsari II 707-737, Raṇadhīra 682-707, Arikēsari I 652-682.[30a] As for the previous kings, we need not concern ourselves with them just now. Now it will be seen that Rājasimha I lived in the period A.D. 707 to 737 when several battles against Nandivarman Pallavamalla could have been fought about A.D. 731.

We are also enabled to regard him as the friend of Saint Sundarar. The king was a staunch Śaiva devotee and worshipped Paśupati at Pāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi. Hence, Sundarar must have lived for 18 years, any time between 710 A.D. and 735 A.D. At present we shall have to be satisfied with this degree of accuracy.

We can now take up one incident mentioned in the *Periya Purāṇam* and also in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* as having taken place in the reign of Cēramān Perumāḷ, Sundaramūrti's friend. That was the visit of Pāṇa Pattiran (Bāṇa Bhadra), the poet. The tradition as recorded in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal Purāṇam* is that the king who ruled at Madura at that time was Varaguṇa. So, if that is true, Cēramān Perumāl's Pāṇḍya contemporary must be a Varaguṇa and not a Rājasimha. In connection with the date of Māṇikkavāśagar, we have had occasion to regard Raṇadhīra as a Varaguṇa. He could very well have been the ruling

[30a]The dates given here and at p. 425 are only rough approximations.

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king at Madura. Looking at the *Periya Purāṇam* account of Cēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār, we notice that the Pāṇa Pattiran's visit is found in St. 26, and the account of his getting to know of Sundarar comes later in St. 45. Thus there is nothing that goes contrary to our conclusions; for the poet must have visited the Cēra country some years before Sundarar became the friend of Cēramān Perumāḷ.

ii. *Chief incidents in the life of Sundarar.*

The first significant event of Sundaramūrti's life, according to the *Periya Purāṇam,* was the appearance before him of the God of Tiruveṇṇainallūr in the form of an aged Brahman on the eve of his marriage. The God said that Sundarar was his bond-slave and so ought to go and work for Him in His house. This is alluded to by Sundarar himself in his two *Padigams* on Tiruveṇṇainallūr.[31] The name of the God of that village is Taḍuttāṭkoṇḍa Īśvarar or the 'God who obstructed and employed'. This itself is a reference to the incident. It is also interesting to notice that neither Sambandar nor Appar has sung of this deity. Probably therefore, there was no such temple during their time. Sundarar also speaks of Tiruveṇṇainallūr-aruḷ-Tuṟai or 'the open place of mercy'. Evidently, the locality was an open place without any temple or even God. Incidentally this illustrates the manner in which there came to be temples where there were none before.

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31 "அத்தாவுனக்காளாயினியல்லே னெனலாமோ" and
"திருவெண்ணெய் நல்லூரில்வைத்தெனை யாளுங்கொண்டார்"
Sun. 1, 1 and 17.

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The next thing mentioned of the saint is his visiting several temples. In the beginning he went to Adigai Vīraṭṭānam, which was famous in connection with Appar. The Periya Purāṇam states that God personally appeared before Sundarar there, and placed His holy feet on his head. Later Sundarar went to Shiyali and other places. It was when he went to Tiruvārūr that God made him His friend and comrade.[32] It was while he was residing there that he sang the *Tiruttoṇḍattogai*.

At Tiruvārūr, Sundarar was being supplied with corn by one of his *Bhaktas,* called Kuṇḍaiyūr Kiḷār. Owing to famine there was scarcity of corn one day and the devotee of Sundarar was therefore very much grieved. Then God appeared before Sundarar and gave him heaps of grain. But it was impossible to remove this large quantity of grain. So he asked God's help for that and accordingly the corn was removed to Paravai's house by Śiva's agents, the *Gaṇas*. This is alluded to by Sundarar in all his ten songs on Tirukkōḷili.[33]

It was very usual for Sundaramūrti to ask God for personal favours which seem to have been granted to

[32] ........நின்வேட்கைதீர
வாழிமண்மேல் விளையாடுவாயென்றாரூரர்
கேட்க வெழுந்ததன்றே
P. P. Taḍuttāṭkoṇḍa, St. 127.
அன்றுமுதலடியார்களெல்லாந் தம்பிரான்றோழரென்றே யறைந்தார்
Ibid. St. 129.

[33] The song begins thus:
நீள நினைந்தடி யேனுமை Sund. 20.

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him. When he was at Tiruppugalūr, he asked for gold for the sake of his consort Paravai, and slept laying his head on bricks. He woke up to find the bricks converted into gold.[34] The Purāṇam goes on to state that Sundarar asked for gold again at Tiruppāccilāccirāmam, and did not get it. So he sang a *padigam* in which each one of the stanzas ended thus: "There is no god other than this." He had his wish granted.[35] On his way to Vṛddhācalam, Sundarar obtained from God 12,000 pieces of gold and according to God's directions, the gold was thrown into the river Maṇimuktā, to be taken later on in the tank at Tiruvārūr.[36] On his way to Vṛddhācalam, God showed him the way to Tirukkūḍalaiyāṟṟūr in person and this is referred to in his songs on that place.[37]

When Sundarar was on his way to Tirukkuṟukāvūr, he is said to have been supplied with food, etc., by God Himself.[38] This is believed to have been alluded to by Sundarar himself in his stanzas on Tirukkuṟukāvūr. The same kind of help was rendered to Sundarar near Tirukkaccūr also. On that occasion God seems to have gone about begging for the sake of his devotee. Sundarar asks, in his Tēvāram songs about that place "If you go about begging, will not your devotees feel miserable

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[34] பதிகம் பாடித்திருக்கடைக்காப் பணிந்து பரவிப்புறம்பு போந்தே யெதிரிலின்பமிம்மையே தருவாரருள் பெற்றெழுந்தருளி வீதியின் குவையுமுடன் கொண்டு விரைவு... P. P. Ēyarkōn, St. 52.

[35] Ibid., St. 82.

[36] P. P. P. Ēyarkōn: Pur., St. 108.

[37] ............"அடிகளிவ்வழிப் போந்தவதிசய மறியேனே" in every one of the stanzas: Sund. 85.

[38] P. P. Ibid., St. 159.


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through grief?"[39] Perhaps he was referring to Śiva's begging for his own sake.

In the neighbourhood of Conjeevaram, at a place called Ōṇakāndan Taḷi, he sang songs and obtained gold.[40] Later on, he went to Tiruvoṟṟiyūr. It was there that he fell in love with Śangili and married her through the intervention of God Śiva according to the Periya Purāṇa account. Sundarar also refers to this in one of his songs where he says "I went to Tiruvoṟṟiyūr and saw Śangili."[41]

The *Periya Purāṇam* account of the incident is that Sundarar requested Śiva to stay under the *Magiḻ* tree when the saint was to swear to Śangili that he would not abandon her. The saint wanted Śangili to go inside the temple, but she had already been informed by Śiva Himself that He was under the tree and not inside the temple. So she asked Sundarar to come to the tree for the oath. Sundarar had to agree, and because, later on, he had to go against his own oath, he lost his eye-sight. These things are alluded to in his songs. The incident is referred to thus: "O Lord of the golden konṟai! You are capable of saying (to Śangili) 'under the Magiḻ' to deceive me who asked you to remain (for a while) under the Magiḻ tree."[42]

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[39] தலையிற் பலிகொள்ளக் கண்டாலடியார் கவலாரோ. Sund. 411.

[40] Ibid., St. 191.

[41] ............சார்ந்தனன் சார்ந்தனன் சங்கிலிமென்றோள் தடமுலை
ஆர்ந்தனனார்ந்தன னாமாத்துறையனருளதே Sund. 45. 4.

[42] பொன்னவிலுங் கொன்றையினாய் போய் மகிழ்க்கீழிருவென்று
சொன்னவெனைக்காணாமே சூளறவு மகிழ்க்கீழே
என்னவல்ல பெருமான்...... Sund. 89. 9.

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His blindness is alluded to in different places. He says, "If it is just that you should deprive me of my eye-sight, you will at least give me a staff."[43] In the next stanza he alludes to his being put to the necessity of being dragged along, on account of his blindness, by some one else.[44] In stanza 9 of the same *Padigam,* he speaks of the inimical attitude adopted by Śiva and for stating this, Sundarar uses astrological language. He says, "You have become to me like Saturn that has entered into the asterism of Makha. O! my Son! my jewel, my bridegroom, I cannot bear the disgrace of being told, by the women-folk, whenever I speak to them, 'get away, you blind fellow'. How am I to live after losing my eye-sight?"[45] Saturn entering into the asterism of Makha means that the planet is entering into Leo, i.e., the house belonging to the Sun, and it is known that Sun and Saturn are enemies.

Sundarar mentions in another place distinctly that Śiva deprived him of his eye-sight because of his love towards Śangili. He says, "O! You who deprived me of my eyes for the sake of Śangili."[46]

---

43 .........அடியேன்கண் கொள்வதே கணக்கு வழக்காகில்
ஊன்று கோலெனக்காவதொன் றருளாய்........ Sund. 54. 4.

44 கழித்தலைப்பட்ட நாயதுபோல வொருவன்கோல் பற்றிக்கறகற இழுக்கை
ஒழித்து நீயருளாய்........ Sund. 54. 5.

45 மகத்திற் புக்கதோர் சனியெனக்கானாய் மைந்தனே மணியே மணவாளா
அகத்திற் பெண்டுகள் நானொன்று சொன்னாலழையேல் போகுருடா வெனத்தரியேன்.
முகத்திற் கண்ணிழந்தெங்ஙனம் வாழ்கேன் ....... Ibid. St. 9.

46 தண்பொழிலொற்றி மாநகருடையாய் சங்கிலிக்காவென்கண் கொண்ட
பண்ப................. Sund. 63. 3.

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There are some more references by Sundarar himself to his blindness, but those so far cited will suffice to show how the incident was one that actually happened.

The Purāṇam speaks of how Sundarar was given a blindman's staff at Tiruveṇpākkam.[47] His left eye became all right when he came to Conjeevaram,[48] and the right eye also was cured when he praised Śiva at Tiruvārūr.[49]

After the diseases were all cured, Sundarar had to seek God's aid for pacifying Paravai who had been offended with Sundarar for his having married Śangili. The incident is elaborately detailed in the *Periya Purāṇam* but we do not find Sundarar alluding to it in his *Tēvāram*.

Perhaps the most detailed of all requests made by Sundarar to God Śiva were the things he asked for in his *Padigam* on Tirunāgaikkārōṇam. (Sund. 46). In the first stanza he asks for a pearl garland, a garland of precious stones, musk and fragrant Śāndu (which is used as a caste-mark on the fore-head). In the second, he asks for spectacles. Then he asks for fragrance, cloths, jewels, one-third of the riches of Tiruvārūr, horses which can go with the swiftness of the wind, golden flowers, palanquins, etc.

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[47] P. P. Ēyarkōn: St. 279.

[48] Ibid., St. 287.

[49] Ibid., St. 310. Sundarar's request for the cure of the eye disease, i.e., his *padigam* on Tiruvārūr beginning with மீளாவடிமை is excellent reading. Sund. 95.

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It was afterwards that he came to know of Cēramān Perumāḷ. After having travelled with him to several places, Sundarar lived with Cēramān for some time and then returned to Tiruvārūr. In the meantime, he is credited with having accomplished several miracles. Finally when he was staying with Cēramān at Tiruvañjikkaḷam, he is spoken of as having got tired of this worldly existence and asked god to take him back to Kailās. Then a white elephant was sent to him. Just as he was starting he sang a *padigam* in which the incident seems to be alluded to. He says. "Knowing that He (God) created me before, what am I to sing of His Golden feet. Alas! for the sake of honouring His dog (myself) He has, in His mercy, sent down the strong elephant. He has separated my body from my soul. He is the Lord of Kailās."[50] It is clear that Sundarar was expressing just what he saw at the moment of his death. The departure to Kailās was not in his physical body, for he himself states that God separated the body from the soul.

Thus we find that the chief feature of Sundaramūrti's life was that like the other *Tēvāram* hymners he went on singing of the glories of Śiva in different places; but at the same time he asked God for several kinds of material comforts. The Śaiva belief is that

50 தானெனைமுன் படைத்தா னதறிந்து தன் பொன்னடிக்கே
நானென்ன பாடலந்தோ நாயினேனைப் பொருட்படுத்து
வானெனை வந்தெதிர் கொள்ள மத்தயானையருள் புரிந்து
ஊனுயிர் வேறு செய்தான் நொடித்தான் மலையுத்தமனே—
Sund. 100. 1.

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Sundarar was living the life of a friend or comrade of Śiva and so he could take any kind of liberties with Śiva. The amount of gold he obtained seems to have been enormous. The question will now arise as to whether he was not one of the most materialistic of men having an attachment for worldly possessions. If so, how was he entitled to the grace of God? The point to be borne in mind is that he did not ask for these things because of a desire for enjoyment. This is clear from the fact that he never thought of retaining what he once got. The fact seems to be that he had no selfish desires at all. Whenever he asked for gold, it was for the sake of those who depended upon him. We cannot believe that he was attached even to his consorts. If he was, he would not have left Śangili Nācciyar at Tiruvoṟṟiyūr, and hurried on to see god of Tiruvārūr even after he lost his eye-sight. His friendship to Cēramān Perumāḷ was again inferior to his love for God; for, it was while enjoying the hospitality of that king that Sundarar was suddenly transported to Kailās at his own request. Evidently then, the ruling passion of his life was his love towards God, whom he regarded as his comrade. That is the reason why Śaivite philosophers speak of Sundarar having followed and demonstrated to the world the path known as *Sakhā Mārga*.

After the death of Sundarar, Śaivism went through various vicissitudes. Śaiva philosophy as contrasted with *Śiva Bhakti* came to assume greater prominence; its opposition to Vaiṣṇavism became more marked; its

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relation to *Advaita* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita* came to be examined in greater detail. Consequently the literature that developed on the subject became voluminous. The attitude adopted towards Śaivism by South Indian monarchs such as Rāja Rāja Cōḷa and others had considerable influence upon the religious history of South India. But this later phase of South Indian Śaivism can be adequately treated only in a separate volume.

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# CORRIGENDA.

| Page. | Line. | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | line 24, | delete comma after 'can'. |
| 7 | line 7, | for 'reveal' read 'reveals'. |
| 118 | last line, | for 'to' read 'in'. |
| 137 | line 6, | delete 'an'. |
| 137 | note 45, | for 'songs' read 'song'. |
| 167 | line 18, | for 'All' read 'At'. |
| 177 | line 8, | for 'frequest' read 'frequent'. |
| 183 | line 2, | for 'this' read 'his'. |
| 191 | line 14, | for 'accorling' read 'according'. |
| 194 | line 30, | for 'that that' read 'that'. |
| 198 | line 22, | for 'literature'. read 'literature?'. |
| 218 | line 14, | for 'he' read 'the'. |
| 219 | line 12, | for 'satified' read 'satisfied'. |
| 295 | line 16, | for 'though' read 'through'. |
| 317 | line 1, | for 'one the cities' read 'one of the cities'. |
| 355 | line 15, | for 'purpose making' read 'purpose of making'. |
| 368 | line 18, | for 'throughly' read 'thoroughly'. |
| 372 | line 26, | for 'not call', read 'not to call'. |
| 377 | line 6, | delete comma after '10.'. |
| 378 | line 14, | for 'diety' read 'deity'. |
| 380 | line 12, | for 'In' read 'in'. |

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